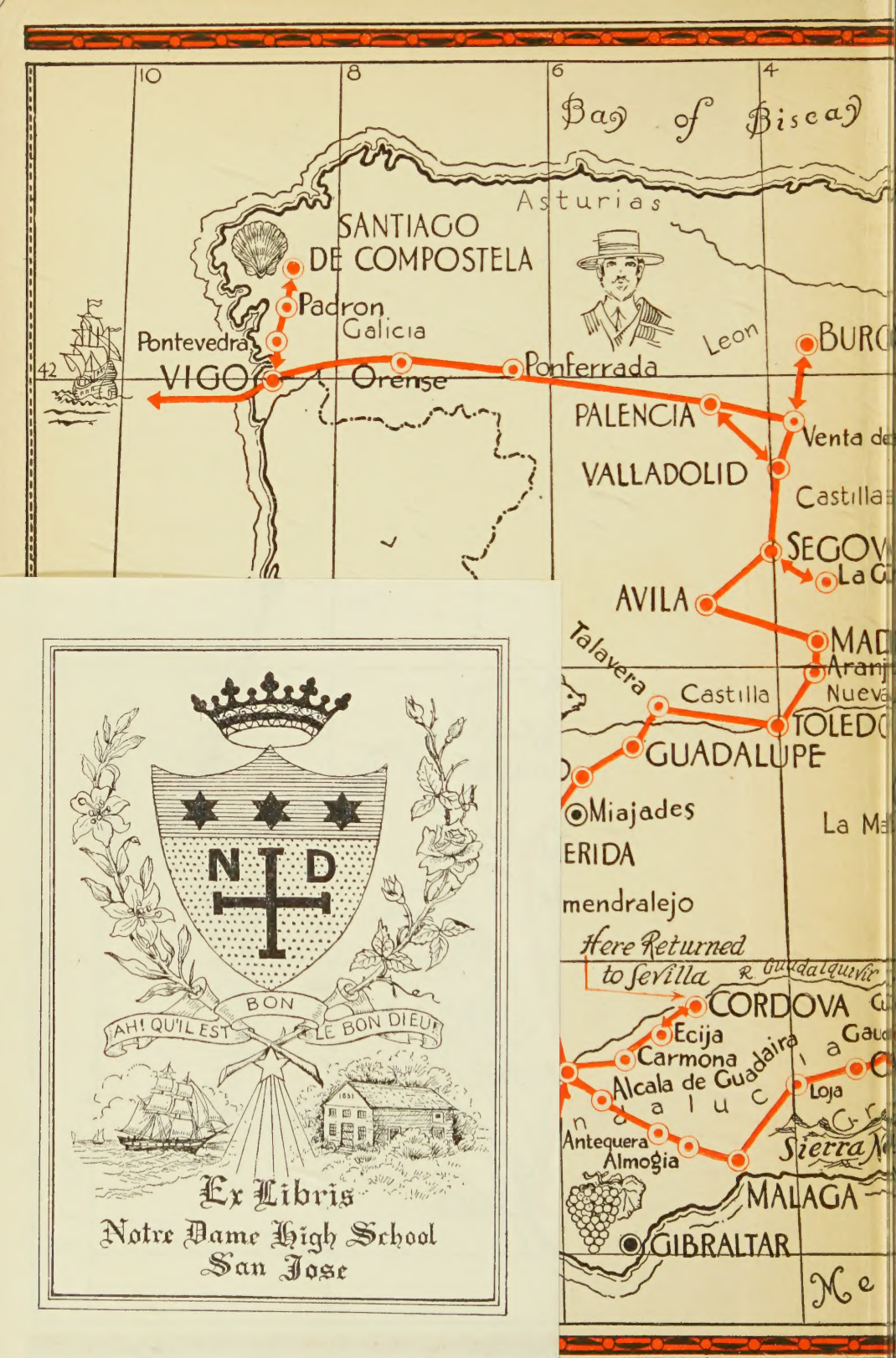
The Road through SPAIN

DOROTHY GILES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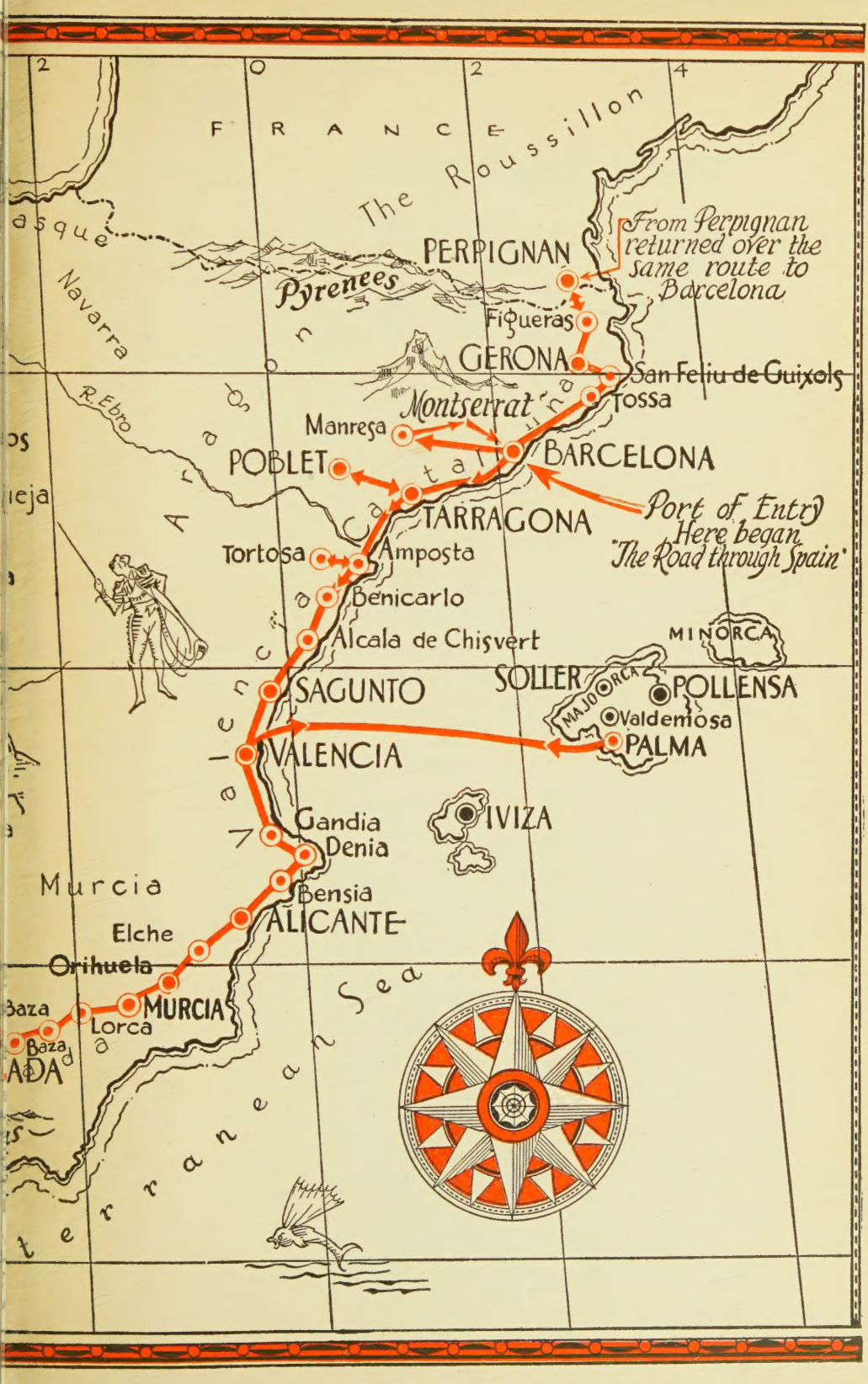
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Manresa
POBLET
BARCELONA
TARRAGONA
Port of Entry
Here began
"The Road through Spain"
Tortosa
Amposta
Benicarlo
Alcala de Chisvert
MINORCA
SOLLER
POLLENSA
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The Road Through
SPAIN

IN A MAJORCAN GARDEN

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL
SAN JOSE, CALIF.

The Road Through SPAIN

Dorothy Giles

THE PENN PUBLISHING
COMPANY PHILADELPHIA

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In Lieu of Dedication

IT IS told of that model of travellers, Don Quixote, how when he had gone a stage of his journey, he besought his host that he would knight him, and how the host, though of but a small inn, entered into his guest's spirit of adventure; for which the grateful Don promised that he would return unto him the accolade of his own deeds as a true knight errant.

The Good Sport, Ximena and I, in our wanderings through the Don's country have met with frequent benisons, not from the great ones only, but from many little hosts of a night or an hour. They gave us shelter against the mischances of the day's journey, food for body and thought, a smile and a "*buen viaje*," and news of the road ahead — thus raising us to the rank of true knight errants of the Don's company.

To them — to the Wooden Soldier of Bascara and the Widow of José Fores, to the Truck Driver from Cadiz, and Gerona's Sacristan, to *la simpática sevillana* and the Wife of the Roadmaker who blessed us at her door, this book is a Quixotic accolade.

Santiago de Campostela,
Provincia de Galicia,
Spain.
June, 1928.

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The Road Through Spain

CHAPTER ONE

AVE CATALUÑA

THE son-in-law of the chief officer of customs who spoke French, roused from his *siesta* — it lacked fifteen minutes of four P.M. — and drawn collarless from his couch to interpret to the altogether mad *señorita americana* who was disturbing the peace of the port of Barcelona with inquiries about an automobile, held both hands modestly about his throat and shook his head above them.

"But," I objected, "the car is on the wharf. I have just seen it there. Also, as *el señor* will observe, I have in readiness all the necessary papers; the licenses, the *carnet des douanes*, the *carnet de circulation international*. Here, too, is the — the — How does one say bill of lading? — *Tous*. *Tous*. All that I lack is the *permiso*. May I not have that this afternoon?"

He smiled upon us as one smiles upon a child inquiring out of season for Santa Claus. Not that afternoon. The *señorita* must understand; it was a saint's day.

"Then, tomorrow?"

He shook his head. Tomorrow would be Saturday. On Saturday one worked only the half day. And (here he grew delicately humorous) even in the North

America, the Sunday was sacred to rest and enjoyment.

I thought of America's motor-mad Sabbaths, but my French was unequal to the task of describing them to him. My Spanish had ceased long before.

"Ah! Then on Monday, of a sureness?"

No. On the whole, he thought not. There were many papers to be made out. Many. Forgetting his collarless state and that we were ladies, he flung wide both hands to express the magnitude of the task. The papers must be filled out by clerks and presented to the proper authorities for confirmation. All that took time.

I was beginning to see that it did.

"Perhaps," he relented sufficiently to hold out a shadow of hope. "On Wednesday —"

"Wednesday morning?" I queried. Though with none of my earlier hopefulness.

"Wednesday *por la tarde.* (In the afternoon). Good day, *señoras.*"

He bowed us out of his father-in-law's cubby hole of an office, and presumably went back to finish his *siesta* in peace. Through the open door of the warehouse on the pier we took another wistful look at Ximena standing meekly amid bales of cotton and barrels of oil. Her orange and black New York license plates seemed suddenly woefully inadequate.

The *Manuel Arnus* had brought the three of us to dock early that morning. The Good Sport and I in the cabin; Ximena in the hold. The slender little white ship that had received us into Spain at the foot of Coenties Slip on a shivery afternoon in late January lay moored now along the far side of the quay.

Beyond, in the harbor basin, forty or more vessels flying as many different flags, supplanted the galleys

which Sancho took for monsters. Innumerable little boats, with high, curved prows painted blue and green and vermillion, chugged and puffed about and between the larger craft.

When the Good Sport and I had announced our intention of spending the winter in Spain, not as conventional tourists condemned to the temperamental vagaries of Iberian railways, but driving ourselves in our own trusty Ford, we had been almost overwhelmed with objections.

What! — Two women, one of them no longer of an age to change a tire — alone — in a Ford — in Spain?

"The roads are impossible! No women drive over there! The mountains are full of bandits! The inns in the small places are dirty and without conveniences! It isn't safe to drink the water! You can't speak the language!"

Only the last presented a real obstacle. True, neither of us did speak Spanish — yet. We had intimated that we intended to learn the language on the ship going over.

At that, the family had thrown up its hands in disgust. Figuratively speaking. What it really did was to bury its scornful nose in the evening paper. But the attitude of the legs that protruded from beneath that sheltering sheet showed more plainly than any words could have done what it thought of the ways of women! Especially of the ways of the women belonging to it!

A visit to the helpful Automobile Club of America confirmed our inspiration about the car into a decision.

In return for a payment of eighty dollars, the Automobile Club would secure for us the requisite *carnets*, and driving licenses. In addition, we were to deposit

two hundred dollars with the Club, which, if we brought the car back to America, would be refunded in whole. If we sold Ximena in Europe, the Club would pay the import duty, and refund the balance to us.

The Club had been as good as its word. There, on the quay stood Ximena seemingly none the worse for her thirteen days at sea. Here were we. In our hands were the cards, grey and red, the two *carnets*, the French registration plates ready to be screwed on in place of the American ones Ximena was wearing. All that was wanting was the Spanish *permiso* which is issued to cars of foreign registration by the Customs Office. For lack of this, we might not take Ximena past the first sentinel on the quay.

This was Friday. Wednesday "*por la tarde*" meant five whole days of waiting before we could start adventuring along the roads of Spain.

We walked away from our disappointment on the pier, across the Plaza de la Paz, where Columbus looks out from atop his tall column over the harbor into which he sailed so triumphantly. It was shortly after four o'clock and the Rambla, which is the pulse of Cataluña as the Puerto del Sol is of Madrid, was beginning on its liveliest hour. About and around us prosperous Barcelona, awaked from its *siesta*, was sipping its afternoon *café con leche*, having its boots blacked, buying papers from the kiosks, and lottery tickets from the street vendors. Their high nasal wail: "*Pa-saa-da mañ-aaana, Pa-saaaa-da,*" cut through the other street noises like the shrill note of a *cicada*. Lotteries in Spain seem always due to be drawn on the day after tomorrow.

The flower stalls, which earlier in the day were fan-

shaped bowers of almond blossoms and mimosa, were now past their prime. But the bird market was in full force. For more than a block the wide promenade between the two lines of street traffic — this constitutes a Rambla (the word is Moorish and means a dry river bed) was lined with stalls. The Spaniards have a passion for these feathered pets. Scarcely a house, no matter how poor, which does not boast at least one cage with a twittering occupant hanging beside the door. Many have four or five.

Whatever the hour, it is always a picturesque crowd that loiters under the plane trees between the kiosks and the market stalls. Stout countrywomen in black or blue silk head kerchiefs and capacious black aprons carrying baskets of green vegetables, two or three hens tied by the legs, or a brace of rabbits by the ears. Soldiers in trailing brown *serapes*, the sunburn of Morocco on their cheeks. A double line of school boys in blue and white striped aprons and black berets, shepherded by a hollow cheeked young priest in a black soutane and low crowned beaver hat. Workmen in black smocks, the front ends caught up and tucked inside their wide blue or purple or magenta sashes. Prosperous Catalan business men, their watch chain clinking wealthily against their waistcoat buttons. Young bloods of the town dressed "*al inglés*" in tightly fitted worsted suits of amazing shades of purple and olive green and weird peacock blue.

In and out through the crowd, bob the scarlet *barretinas* of the Catalan workmen — that last survival of the liberty cap, but worn with the bag brought forward and folded squarely across the forehead. There is a thick sprinkling of sailors strolling two and two,

stopping to read the headlines of the papers displayed at the kiosks, and to stare into the shop windows. One of these displays the pigtail of a famous bull fighter, neatly framed and glazed, with the legend of his victories inscribed beneath.

They stop, too, but more self-consciously, to patronize the public letter writers in their booths beside the wall of Our Lady of Belen — those yellow booths that are for all the world like confessionals; that are confessionals in truth, since they are an indication of the weakest spot in Spain's national life, a population of eleven millions that can neither read nor write.

We sat to rest at a sidewalk café. The waiter came and we ordered chocolate *al espagnol*, cups of thick chocolate custard very bitter on the tongue. There were azucarillos to be enjoyed with it, sticks of spongy sugar stuck into glasses over which one poured tepid water from the carafe. A spoonful of chocolate, a sip of sweetened water, a bite of dry, flavourless sponge cake — result, the Spanish bourgeoise's idea of a delectable afternoon refreshment.

We were not at first aware that we were occasioning no small amount of interest to a pretty nursemaid. She stopped directly in front of our table and surveyed us with the unabashed curiosity which is characteristic of Spain. If she found our American hats and shoes an interesting spectacle, even more so did we find her in her long gold ear rings set with garnets, her full pleated skirt of red and black plaid over voluminous petticoats, her velvet jacket that fastened snugly down the front with round silver buttons. She wore a head kerchief

of plaid silk folded to a small bandeau about a tall comb. Her cuffs, collar and apron were trimmed with bands of yellow lace.

Her charge, a sturdy *niño* of about one year old, was equally picturesque in an extraordinary hat made of wicker, like a sewing basket. It was octagonal, and the brim — if one could say the thing had a brim — curved upward to the dome-like crown.

"For all the world like a cottage loaf," whispered the Good Sport.

It was like that concomitant of the British breakfast board, round and firm and well glazed. But it sported a frivolous red bow atop, and it was tied snugly under the wearer's chin with red ribbon strings.

Where had we seen something like it before?

Suddenly I remembered confections of similar shape made of lace over whalebone, that crown the heads of Dutch babies in the seventeenth century genre paintings. Once, too, in Amsterdam, I had looked through a half opened door and seen a toddler so coiffed against the danger of tumbles on the tiled floor. For close on to two centuries Spain had held the Low Countries in fief. Was this Catalan straw bonnet the progenitor, or the descendant of the Dutch cap?

The idea fascinated us. No less did the baby. I put out an investigating finger; the baby gurgled, the nursemaid smiled widely. With a gesture of superb generosity, she placed *el niño* in my arms and strolled a block up the Paseo where she entered into animated conversation with two old women, a soldier and an aged vendor of coconuts.

The baby blinked at me under its amazing headgear. It seemed good naturedly impervious to a change of

guardians. The drinkers at the surrounding tables paused in their torrent of conversation sufficient time to nod pleasantly at me or at the baby. The waiter, beaming paternally upon us both, hovered about and flicked away the flies with his napkin.

"Suppose it turns into a pig," said the Good Sport who knows her *Alice*.

"In that case we can buy a basket, put the pig-baby in it, and hang it from the roof of the car."

"If we ever get the car —"

This reminder of our Fordless state was rather a damper. Too, the baby was growing heavy on my arm. The group beside the barrow of coconuts gave no sign of disbanding. The nursemaid had laid her head on the soldier's shoulder. With one arm he supported her, with the other he fed her dainty morsels of coconut from the tip of his broad, short sword blade.

I gathered up the baby and strode in the direction of its negligent guardian. "This baby belongs to you," I said. "*No quiero.*"

With a cry of anguished recollection, the nursemaid fell upon *el niño*. She snatched him jealously from my arms, smothering him with kisses until his hat was wildly askew. She passed him to the soldier and to the old women, each of whom was in turn equally demonstrative. Feeling ourselves a little *de trop* we turned away. A last backward look showed the baby being rewarded with bits of chewed coconut taken from the mouths of its protectors.

Barcelona la rica!

The Catalan capital is the only city in Spain which

more than justifies its mediæval importance. It was a great city in Roman days. Hamilcar Barca founded it, and bequeathed it his name. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries she ranked with Genoa and Naples as the three queens of the Mediterranean. Her Consulado del Mar, the gift of Jaime, the Conquistador, was adopted by all the other powers and forms the basis of modern maritime law. Her glass foundries rivalled those of Venice. Hundreds of looms hummed in her streets, weaving cloth from fine Spanish wool — the finest in the world. They dyed it, too, that much desired scarlet which the Phœnicians discovered could be made from the black, shining excrescences that appeared on the dwarf oaks on Spanish hillsides. The strong boxes of her Jews held mortgages on the properties of half the princelings of Europe.

Today, as then, Barcelona is the most prosperous city in Spain, and the most enterprising. She carries the tradition of Spanish sloth like a thorn in her side. She is the heart of that movement just beginning to be felt which prophetic economists call the Mediterranean Renaissance.

Barcelona, itself, is not Spanish at all, but Catalan. Perhaps that is the secret. Newspapers, books, plays in the *lingua provinciæ*, derived from old Provençal, make this the tongue not only of the peasants, but of the young intellectuals. In that tongue sang the troubadours. Don Juan I of Aragon established a College of Troubadours in Barcelona where young poetasters were taught "the Gay Science." They held an annual competition on the first Sunday in May, known as the Jochs Florals, a quaint custom which the city has recently revived.

In the sunny Plaza Cataluña, M. Forrestier's fountains splash gaily. Children in abbreviated skirts and much beribboned bonnets play in the gravel under the eye of smart nursemaids, while the old man who takes the tickets for the chairs — ten *centimos* on week days, twenty *centimos* on Sundays, but sit as long as you please — presides over the gathering like a ragged St. Nicholas. Round about on all four sides, flows the street traffic; buses, trams, trucks, taxis and carts in a dense stream. Honking, jangling, screeching. The steel skeleton of a skyscraper stretches greedily toward the sky. Billboards on the roofs of banks and office buildings blare the super-excellence of the same tooth-pastes and spark-plugs we see heralded in America.

But, one turn to the left and another to the right. And presto! Modern Barcelona is as though it were not. Before us rise the twin bastions of the ancient gate that guarded the Roman city from the north. These massive stone round towers resisted Moors and French, the last many times over. They stood firm against Castile too; Cataluña was never a favorite with the sovereigns of Burgos and Valladolid. The passage between the towers is perilously strait. A taxi coming honking behind us and driving us to flatten ourselves as thinly as possible against the wall, makes it with difficulty. The hub caps strike sparks from the stones. Half way up the eastern bastion is a tiny iron spike on which votive candles can be impaled. Thick drippings of wax over the stones tell of hundreds of lights that have blossomed there full fifteen feet up on the face of Cæsar Augustus' round tower. One wonders what means the pious take to scale the height. One hopes, too, that the gain is worth the candle.

The gate is all that remains of the Roman fortifications except three or four arches opposite the church of Santa Maria del Mar. These have been filled in with shops whose fronts flutter vividly with orange and pink and magenta shawls, and blankets, and scarves to catch a sailor's eye.

Santa Maria del Mar is the seamen's church. It preëmpted the site and the fame of the early seaside chapel which was the burial place of Santa Eulalia, patron of Catalan fishermen. Many of the boats that ply about the harbor bear her name.

It was long the custom for sailors starting on a far voyage to pay their last devotions at her tomb. Long ago her relics were removed to a magnificent silver shrine in the cathedral, but the rudely carved stone sarcophagus, dating from the third century, which was their original resting place was left behind in the church by the sea where it does duty as a baptismal font. Sailors' sons are brought to be christened therein now as they have been for six centuries.

As we stood on the steps, a procession of six fishwives in coarse blue skirts and knitted black shawls passed by. Each one balanced on her head a wide ozier tray filled with gleaming salmonetes. They walked with the proud, untrammelled movement which is incomprehensible to those of us who have never carried more than our hair and our hats on the tops of our crowns. The great basket twirled with each movement of the bearer's head, but never threatened a fall.

This late afternoon haul was destined for the fried fish shops along the Ramblas and the Paralello, Barcelona's Great White Way. These do a thriving business between one and three A.M. when the theatres and cafés

are out; fried fish and radishes being considered the proper after-theatre supper throughout Spain.

Away from the tiny plaza before Santa Maria the streets grow narrower. Tall, austere houses shut out all possibility of sun. The many colored glass lanterns in the Calle Fernando VII, where one may buy old embroidered shawls and ivories and silver and pearls and lace — or merely look at these — need to be lighted as soon as the *siesta* hour is over.

In these close-walled, winding streets stood the palaces of Cataluña's ancient sea lords, the *ricos hombres* who formed the first Aragonese nobility. One of them, Ramon de Plegamans, supplied out of his own pocket the arms, the siege apparatus and the provisions for the Conquistador's campaign against Majorca.

Somewhere hereabouts, lived the whimsical Don Antonio Morena who entertained Don Quixote with his device of an enchanted head, and so jeopardized his own head with the Office of the Inquisition.

Today, Barcelona's *ricos hombres* prefer the modern apartment houses built by Gaudi along the Paseo de Gracias. The old palaces have lost their once proud estate. The upper rooms, many of them still showing traces of fine artesonado ceilings — have been cut up into tenements. The stone-paved courts below do duty as *bodegas* for wine, ship chandlers' stores and provision merchants. Above one portentous Romanesque gate appear the arms of Cataluña — four perpendicular bars on a shield. Charles the Bold dipped his finger in Wilfred the Shaggy's open wound, and drew four crimson stripes across the Count's honorably battered shield. "What has been won by blood, should be written in blood," said the King.

THE GATE OF PITY — BARCELONA

THE PATIO OF THE ARCHDEACON'S PALACE — BARCELONA

"SO SLOW TO COME; SO SWIFT TO GO"

There are museums in Barcelona, but we did not go to them. The living pageant of the streets superseded dusty monuments in our eyes.

Only the Archives of Aragon, that amazing library of close to three million manuscript volumes and parchment rolls, lured us to spend an hour delving into the past. In that one room of Charles V's palace is stored the unbroken record of five centuries. Pages of neat monkish script tell the story of wars and Councils, royal marriage settlements decreeing to a *maravedi* the value of the trousseau. By a fourteenth century law, no husband might be asked to furnish his wife more than three suits of clothing during the first year of their marriage.

One volume holds the record of the "Monk King" Ramiro, whose story is as poignantly human as Hamlet's. When Alfonso I died without issue, his brother was called from his cell at Fontfroide to be king in Aragon. He proved a poor sort of king, more at home with his Aves and Paternosters than with courts or armies. His nobles openly rebelled. His wife, — dutifully he had married a princess of Aquitaine, — scorned him. When she bore him a daughter Petronilla, Ramiro betrothed the child at the age of three to the fifty-three year old Count of Barcelona, Ramon Berenguer. Then he put off his crown, went back to Fontfroide, and washed his hands of kingdoms temporal forever.

Doña Petronilla's dowry was itemized in detail. It would seem that this fragment of human history had touched the historian more than all the treaties and councils. He, or some other hand more skilled than his, has illustrated it. Sketched in careful pen strokes filled in with crimson and lapis and gold, are the figures of

the pitiful Monk King and his Queen; the bearded, middle-aged bridegroom, and the bride. The artist did not allow his brush to insist unduly upon the bride's youth. Perhaps he remembered King Ramiro's "bell" framed of the heads of the fourteen nobles who had mocked him, and sent on an oxcart from village to village, and safeguarded his own head accordingly.

From the windows of the room of the archives one looks down into the deserted Plaza del Rey. Once, this was the centre of the city and the life of a kingdom. Ships moored close to its ancient palaces. On the semi-circular stone steps of the royal chapel of Santa Aguĕda the Reyes Catholicos sat in state to receive Columbus returned from the New World. A still older king had set his seal there before them. Beside the steps stands a lone column — all that is left of the palace of Hamilcar Barca.

A steep street, so narrow that it excludes all but the smallest of Spanish donkeys, brought us to the cathedral. From the apse, a gallery of gargoyles leered down at us. We sat to take breath on the steps of St. Lucy's Chapel, and so discovered what travellers of sounder wind might well pass by — the letter box in the wall of the archdiaconal palace. It was exactly on the level of our eyes. Either the Archdeacon, for whose comfort the fifteenth century palace was built, or the architect, who built it, had a poet's fancy. The opening is framed in a garland of sculptured ivy, on the lower edge a tortoise appears, entering. From the top, a flight of swallows takes wing. The postman's whistle, or what corresponded to it five centuries ago, would seem to have been awaited as eagerly as today.

La Seo, so Barcelona's cathedral is called after the

custom of Cataluña, meaning "the Seat," is unique in Spain. The great church of Seville is larger; the Cathedral of Burgos more beautiful; that of Leon more magnificent; Toledo's more solemnly imposing. But in all Spain, perhaps in all the world, no other church is so human.

The cloisters have been thrown open to form a convenient shortcut from street to street. There is a constant flow of life through their arcades —— University students in fore and aft caps, like those of the A.E.F., but with vari-colored tassels bobbing over their noses; lawyers' clerks, workmen, servants with market baskets. A dozen old men and women take their *siestas* curled up in the sun on the edge of the dreary garth. A lone swan swims forlornly in the lavatory fountain; children play hop-scotch on the gravestones of the knights of the Franche Comté.

It is the gathering place of the city's beggars. These are not so numerous as when Gustav Doré came here with his sketch book in search of "types." But their picturesqueness and their hauteur have not diminished. The manner, with the privilege, is a family tradition. Begging, like bull fighting, runs in families. The ragged mantle descends from father to son. There are lucky corners that have been held by members of the same family for two centuries.

The interior of La Seo is very dark. One steps warily over the uneven stone floor. Dusty chapels line the aisles. One, dedicated to St. Ramon de Peñaforts, perpetuates the memory of the Conquistador's spiritual advisor. The post was no sinecure. The Bishop of Gerona who held it for a time had his tongue cut out for reproving King Jaime for his sins.

As one's eyes grow accustomed to the dimness, they discern the outlines and features of a gigantic Moor's head dangling with horrible significance from a corbel in the north transept. Mahomet forced to witness the triumph of the Cross! The painted face, with the curling red lips, is gruesomely life-like. The beard, renewed every score of years, is made of two donkeys' tails.

The coro, with its richly carved choir stalls, blocks the nave and prevents a vista of the high altar — a defect of most Spanish cathedrals. Above the stalls are emblazoned in colors still rich and proud, the coats of arms of the members of the Order of the Golden Fleece which met here in 1519, when nineteen year old Charles V presided.

But the treasure of the cathedral is the Christ of Lepanto. This wooden figure which hung from the mast head of Don John of Austria's flag ship was the cynosure of every Spanish seaman's eyes through the storm of the great engagement. Cervantes, who lost an arm in the fighting, recalled it no less vividly than the gallant figure of the prince, brave Don John, who is one of the romantic heroes of all time, standing on the quarter deck in the daring of his white and gold brocade. When he sailed back into Barcelona's harbor, La Seo's bells pealed a *Te Deum*. He hung his Christ here and a lanthorn from his ship before the altar of Guadalupe before he rode north into Flanders.

"The last knight of Europe . . .
"The last and lingering troubadour
to whom the bird has sung . . ."

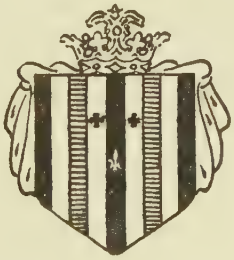
Chesterton calls him.

Cataluña loved him as it later loved a second Don John, the son of Philip IV and the actress Maria Calde-

ron, for whose sake hundreds of solid Barcelonese took up arms.

In popular devotion, Don John's Christ supersedes the high altar behind which it hangs. The wooden benches before it are never without rows of kneeling penitents. Here come the solid Catalan shopkeepers and their wives, the servant girls and the shop assistants, the clerks and the mechanics, as the seafolk flock to Santa Eulalia.

The blur of many candles lightens the gloom of the ambulatory. Above the bowed heads and the candles hangs the dying figure with its loin cloth of purple silk. The body is drawn shrinkingly to one side. It turned so, to escape a Turkish cannon ball, says legend.



CHAPTER TWO

THE CASTLE OF THE HOLY GRAIL

"BOLAS! BOLAS DE NI-E-VE!" The hawkers' cry prolonged itself the length of the Paseo de Gracias. The Carnival was on.

For three days Barcelona set business aside to keep its last *fiesta* before Lent. The streets were thronged with masqueraders, even the small children wore fancy dress. There were diminutive infantas straight out of the canvases of Velasquez, elegant little marquises, pirates, sailors, fishermen and tiny Catalanas in bobbing ear rings, tight-fitting velvet jackets and full plaid skirts. There were dances at the hotels and the Lyceo, and on Sunday afternoon a procession of floats and flower-wreathed motors along the Paseo de Gracias. Up and down they passed while the music played and the spectators pelted the participants with tissue paper snow balls, *bolas de nieve*.

It was all very innocent and good humored, and refreshingly naif, this spectacle of a prosperous twentieth century city disporting itself in so childish a fashion. Hiding its sober work-a-day face behind a monstrous *papier mâché* nose . . .

Echoes of carnival gaiety followed us as we took the bus — alas for Ximena! — to Manresa and Montserrat.

We rode out along the Paseo through the carnival

throng and up the slope of Tibidabo. This steep hill, which backs Barcelona at the west, is popularly supposed to have been the scene of Christ's temptation — whence the name. The road, fine and well graded, encircled the hillside turning and twisting as Spanish roads will. From every turn there were wide views of the city with the open basketry towers of Gaudi's new cathedral rising above the lesser roofs.

The green mass of Montjuich with its batteries pointed out to sea hid the harbor from our view. Lord Peterborough captured it in 1705. He of the many love affairs. The mountain side toward us was gardened. Out of the green and flowering mass gleamed the white buildings of the forthcoming Exposition. For more than three centuries the mountain was the home of the city outcasts. Gypsies and vagabonds squatted in the miserable cave dwellings that were left vacant when Spain expelled the Jews who had been driven there by the Inquisition. Thousands of these wretched people fled to Turkey. Turkish Jews are Spanish speaking to this day and publish their newspapers in the tongue of Castile.

The valley behind Tibidabo was richly forested with pines. In the poor ground about their roots, the gorse flourished, and edging the road, where the sun could reach it, were tufts of wild lavender in scented flower. Though it was February, the bees were busy about the blossoms. Beyond, to the west and north, rose other hills, fold on fold, with narrow valleys between, the rich mountain land of Cataluña which is, after Estremadura, the least known province of Spain. After La Rabasada on the western slope, the road dropped down to the village of San Cugat del Vallés, a settlement of

fine gardened villas about the ruined twelfth century abbey.

San Cugat's convent was a great house before the Moorish invasion. The invaders sacked it, burnt its library and murdered the abbot. Three centuries later, the Benedictines came back and made it one of the great abbeys of northern Spain. Then were built the sturdy Romanesque cloisters, two storied. It is one of the finest in the world. The strong round arches spring from richly carved capitals. We made a tour of the lower arcade seeking the group on which is carved the story of the cloisters' building; the masons and stone cutters and sculptors at their tasks and among them the master builder, "Arnold Catell, who constructed this cloister such as it is that it might last forever."

One may still decipher the words out into the stone. The passing centuries cannot dim their honorable pride.

Beyond San Cugat the road wound on through the plain of Sardañola, rich in farms and fruit orchards and useful bean fields. Past Sabadell and Terrassa, the centre of Cataluña's cotton spinning. Modern manufacture has almost wiped out the record of Terrassa's past. But there remains the ancient square church of San Miguel with a painted dome that is reminiscent of that other stronghold of the Goths — Ravenna. There was a Roman settlement in Terrassa before the Goths came streaming down through the passes in the Pyrenees. Some of the columns in St. Michael's church did duty in an earlier temple to Diana.

Terrassa's mills spin and weave cotton cloth for all Spain, and for most of the Mediterranean trade beside. Great yawning bales marked U.S.A. stood about the

THE MOUNTAIN MONASTERY OF MONTSERRAT

warehouse doors. Spain is our South's best customer. She buys of us forty million dollars worth of raw cotton every year.

It was open country beyond Terrassa.

In the farms that February day, men and women were at work between rows of blossoming broad beans. The eternal service to the soil was in progress. The houses, set unromantically in the midst of tilled fields, were square and brown, solidly utilitarian, with brown tiled roofs drawn low over their undecorated walls. Each house had its open water tank built against the wall. There were women washing in these tanks, spanking the linen clean with broad wicker paddles against the masonry wall, and then spreading it to dry on the hedges of agave that separate one market garden from the next. At one farm, it was not linen they washed, but cabbages and bunches of pearly leeks, making these ready for the morning market.

There was not an inch of wasted soil anywhere. One thought of the saying current in Spain: "The Catalan knows how to make bread out of stones."

A succession of farm houses crowned the rises, each with its sundial painted on the wall.

There is something divinely humble about a people who take their time from the sun. The rhythm of its life, marked by the silent creeping of the gnomen's shadow across the wall is slower, deeper, more gracious than the movement of those nations who live out their little day to the metronomic ticking of clocks, the clang of bells, and the shriek of factory whistles. Time so measured, merges into Eternity. And, if there are not hours enough today, tomorrow, *gracias Dios*, brings another sun.

Before us, stark against the western sky rose the mountain of Montserrat. On its heights stands the shrine of the famous "black" virgin, which according to legend, was carved by no less significant a hand than St. Luke's, who gave it to St. Peter, who, in the course of his journeyings, brought it to Spain. Nuestra Señora de Montserrat is the patron of Cataluña. Not a house in the province but has at least one representation of the crowned Mother with her sceptre and her Child. No Catalan bride and groom are properly wedded until, in the first weeks of their honeymoon, they make their pilgrimage to the mountain top, light their votive candles, and say their prayers before the golden shrine.

At Monistrol, the railroad junction for the Montserrat, the bus road left the rushing Llobregat and followed the winding way of the tiny Cardoner around the base of the gigantic rocky mountain. Craning our necks, we could make out, high up on the stern face, the ledge that supports the buildings of the famous monastery.

We planned to go on in the bus to Manresa and come back the next morning for the ascent of the mountain.

Manresa, a tumbled mass of uneven brown walls, browner roofs and quaint brown towers, was our first real Spanish town. We rattled into it over the high backed, stone bridge with its five arches that the Romans built. From the abrupt cliff above the Cardoner rose the modern façade of the fourteenth century cathedral. Its walls without transepts are buttressed with sixteen buttresses on either side, built curiously, partly without, partly within the church. Like Barcelona's La Seo, Manresa's church has an enormous, bearded Saracen's head suspended from the ceiling.

In a lonely cave near Manresa lived Ignatius Loyola and wrote his *SPIRITUAL EXERCISE*. The cavern, now a part of the Church of the Holy Cave, is the Mecca of thousands of pilgrims. But alas, the walls have been so gilded and hung with statues and tablets and bits of mosaic that the sanctity of the spot seems lost. Doubtless, somewhere hereabouts was the cross road where the soldier saint drew rein, undecided whether duty called him to do battle with the Saracen knight, or to go on to Montserrat. He left the decision to his mount. And the horse, turning to the right, bore him to Montserrat, and changed the history of Europe thereby.

Few tourists come to Manresa. We were objects of curiosity in the Plaza of Santo Domingo where the omnibus set us down. Hundreds of stout country folk from the villages of Cataluña had come into town to keep Carnival. Everywhere in the throng we saw the Catalan festal dress — a full pleated skirt of rich red plaid, tight black velvet jacket fastened down the front with round silver buttons, and a kerchief of plaid silk folded like a bandeau about the head. Long ear rings made of three silver balls, or the lovelier, more ornate kind of wrought gold set with garnets, completed the costume.

Meanwhile about the plaza, charlatans had set up their booths. One fellow passenger of the bus had set up a tiny stage and a marionette show that drew a crowd of gaping country folk. A blind ballad singer twanged a guitar and intoned nasally the sorrowful tale of a highwayman on the road to Lérida, who fell into the clutches of the *carabinieros*. These ballads are a specialty of Manresa. With the town of Carmona

in Andalusia, it long enjoyed the exclusive privilege of publishing the rhymed accounts of hangings and poisonings and thieving which are the stock in trade of Silas Weggs in every market place throughout Spain.

Our fonda had a wide stable yard, the biggest part of the inn. Through the entrance arch we saw a score of uptilted farm carts and a long picket line of horses. At midnight there was the jangling of harness and creak of wooden wheels over the cobblestones as some of the country folk started back to their villages, after the *fiesta*. Others camped there all night, and cooked their suppers in scorched earthenware casseroles over tiny charcoal fires. The glow of the coals threw into fantastic relief the thin shrewd face of an old man with a black handkerchief bound about his brows, one end falling down behind; the patient, brooding tenderness of a woman nursing her child; a group of card players around a guttering candle.

We dined epicureanly at the table d'hôte on partridges Catalan.

We made an early start next morning. The deep throated bells of the Colegiata were pealing as the diligence jolted over the uneven paving of the Torrente de San Ignacio. The bulky mass of the Colegiata was all warm gold in the morning sun. Its many buttresses cast sharp violet shadows on its walls. To the west rose fold on fold of purple hills into Aragon, and southward, filling our eyes as we crossed the bridge, was the rocky mass of Montserrat.

At Monistrol we descended and climbed into one of the box-like carriages of the tiny cogwheel railway that climbs the monastery. Down in a deep cleft below us coursed the turbulent waters of the Llobregat, once the

southern boundary of France. Towering majestically above us was the holy mountain. It rose above the lesser green clad hills in pinnacles of grey rock like the towers of a Titan's castle.

Montsalvat, they called it when Charlemagne and his paladins delivered Cataluña from the Moors. The giant mountain appealed to the romantic imagination of the troubadours. Into Provence and Normandy and the Rhinelands they carried tales of the sacred mountain in whose almost inaccessible caves holy men sought refuge from the world. Here, they said, was the hiding place of the Holy Grail. In this impregnable castle of Nature's building, Parsifal and his knights kept their deathless vigil.

There is a Wagnerian grandeur about the height. The tremendous drama to which he gave this for a setting springs naturally from the awefulness of the scene.

There was no awe, however, about the company that approached it. To Catalans of every class, a trip to Montserrat combines the delights of carnival, holy week and the *feria* of St. George. A fat, middle-class papa was taking his two small daughters on a holiday excursion. A group of workmen in black smocks and scarlet *barretinas*, a spectacled German tourist in a raincoat, a woman carrying a child with a shrunken leg — it was easy to guess her errand — two country women, one with a pair of live fowls under her arm; a priest, and three *matrimonios* — so in one word does Spain say "husband and wife," wedged themselves closer together to give us room.

The *matrimonios* were light-hearted young things, unashamedly in love with each other. Not a little of

the Carnival spirit lingered with them. The brides were hatless in their wedding finery of ill-fitted, bright colored cloth dresses and glittering ear rings.

We proceeded in a series of spasmodic clutches and jerks that set all the heads to bobbing. Soon the cultivated lands stopped. We passed through a belt of pines, then higher still above the forest line up the sheer rock on which only a few tufts of rosemary found foothold.

At a point where the motor road made a sharp curve across the railway, the gates were guarded by a dog. He wore a rakish black beret, and held a stout stick like a gun between his paws. He sat "at attention" while the train passed. Evidently he was expected for heads were thrust from the windows the length of the train, and a shower of copper "little dogs" fell about him. His master lurking behind the watchman's house grinned approval.

The monastery buildings are perched on a ledge some distance down from the peak. From this vantage point one sees spread out in full magnificence the gorge of the Llobregat, and the valleys and lesser hills of Cataluña to the sea. A blur of smoke by the edge of the Mediterranean was Barcelona. On a clear day the eye may distinguish a speck on the horizon forty miles out to sea — full eighty miles from the mountain — the Puig Mayor of Majorca.

Northward rise the Spanish Pyrenees with their Catalan names — Puig Roda (pronounced Pootch), Puigcerda, Puigmal, and the Canigou — the last, in France.

High above one's head tower the grey rocks, carved by Time to look like giant upreaching fingers. The

Arabs called them "the watchmen." One, called the Eleven O'clock Rock, serves the inhabitants of Monistrol as a sundial. A deep fissure which cleaves the peak to the southwest bears the name of the Evil Valley. By popular superstition, this was cut by the earthquake which occurred at the moment of Christ's death.

There was a Benedictine convent on the Montserrat before the Moorish invasion of 717. A century and a half later, wandering shepherds found a statue of the Virgin in a cave among the rocks. Piously they sought to bring it down to their parish church in Manresa, but the statue refused to move beyond the plateau. All the shepherds' urgings and pushings were in vain. A shrine was built for the *sagrada imagen* there in the mountain of her choice and a company of women founded a convent nearby. Later, this was disestablished, and the property turned over to the Benedictines who made Montserrat the most popular shrine in Spain after that of Santiago de Campostela.

To these two shrines, the penitent Ramon Lull made devout pilgrimage. Hither, too, came Ignatius de Loyola after Pamplona. He kept vigil before the altar of Montserrat on the Christmas Eve of 1522, and left his sword in tribute.

The chapel where Loyola offered his arms and himself is no more. Philip II ordered a greater, more magnificent shrine built in its place. One passes through what was an arch of the early church into a paved courtyard surrounded by the monastery buildings and guest houses. It is like a vast barracks with rooms for a thousand pilgrims. Guests may stay three days, longer if it is not the season of larger pilgrimages.

Across the quadrangle the door of the shrine stands

wide. It is a golden tabernacle that Philip's zeal and the piety of millions of pilgrims have created on the lonely mountain top. The *sagrada imagen*, high above the baroque altar, smiles a bit wistfully under her crown of gold and jewels. The sceptre in her hand outweighs the Child. She is Queen first; not the sad-eyed Mater Dolorosa of the shrines of Andalusia.

Did the Evangelist Luke really carve this portrait of the mother of the Saviour?

Quien sabe?

The features are Byzantine, not Gothic. They have none of the naiveté of early western representations. It may date from the second or third Christian century when Spain had constant contact with Rome and Constantinople. It may, as other images elsewhere have been known to do, have been born a heathen goddess, and suffered conversion when a new creed crossed the Pyrenees.

And why is she black?

Again, who can tell?

Perhaps the flare of candles, the smoke of incense through more than one thousand years have darkened those thin cheeks and the aquiline nose. Perhaps the artist, St. Luke or another, used for his purpose some wood which darkens richly with age.

But who would raise questions such as these while the door to that golden sanctuary stands open to the Lady's children. When those children come, day after day, as they have come through the centuries, to make their petitions and leave their gifts, to look wonderingly at the rooms filled with votive offerings behind the altar — necklaces and brooches and ear-rings; swords and soldiers' caps from many campaigns; models of

ships that have weathered gales under the protection of Nuestra Señora de Montserrat, and plaster moulds of legs and arms and heads.

Then, having paid respectful homage, to walk the winding mountain paths, to the cave of St. John Garin, who died there of remorse and self-inflicted penance for his desertion of the Countess Requilda — and to eat a gay luncheon at the restaurant beside the gate — eight pesetas at the elegant table d'hôte upstairs; six pesetas below, where the company is more picturesque and the cheese soup equally delicious.

The *matrimonios* went before us into the church. The little brides paused on the threshold while the husbands fumbled through pockets for the requisite head coverings. Two had made thoughtful provision of black net mantillas. The other had only a clean white pocket handkerchief. But the Virgin's smile was the same for all.

They had bought their tall, white votive candles at the tiny shop in the courtyard which a cowled brother opened up with great show of business when he saw us coming. Hand in hand they went from the sunny courtyard through the dark church to the golden throne, lighted their candles, knelt and prayed for the happiness of their union, and the joy of a first born son.

And the Lady looked down and smiled — was it only the flicker of the candle flames? — but it seemed to me she promised all we asked.

CHAPTER THREE

ALONG THE COSTA BRAVA

THE son-in-law of the Jefe de Adouana was better than his word. On Tuesday, *por la tarde*, a messenger arrived at our hotel with the welcome news that all the formalities having been complied with, Ximena was ours.

Leaving the Good Sport to finish the packing, I went off with the young man to the Customs House.

There, in the warehouse, stood Ximena just as we had seen her five days before. A little dustier, and powdered over with bits of cotton from the yawning bales marked U.S.A. that stood about her. But she was ours. We had the *permiso* and the Jefe de Adouana had our fifty *pesetas*. The gate stood open to adventure!

Our plan was to go northward first through Cataluña to the Pyrenees. The dim blue peaks seen from Montserrat beckoned to us. Somewhere in the valleys between was the spot where Europe ends and Spain begins. We wanted to find it for ourselves.

The garage men stood about the door to see us off. They gave us encouraging word of the road ahead — "*buena carretera*" as far as Figueras, beyond that — they shrugged noncommittally. In the Cerdagne the snow lay deep. We would have to cross by the Col de

Perthus, the pass made famous by Hannibal and his elephants.

We began to feel like real travellers as we jotted down names and suggestions in the Michelin Guide. The bookkeeper came out of his cage to shake hands with us gravely. He spoke English — American English, for he had been educated in an American business college not thirty miles from our own home. His tone implied that he was at a loss to understand why anyone who lived within sight of "that so beautiful Hudson River" should have any desire for the Pyrenees. He spoke with longing of Poughkeepsie.

We waved to him encouragingly as we nosed our way into the traffic northward bound along the Ronda de San Pedro to the triumphal arch, through that much-photographed relic of the pompous eighties, then north again. On the angle of a house wall we read the first blue and white sign promised in the Michelin Guide; *Carretera á Francia.* The Highroad to France.

The traffic was with us; heavy, two wheeled carts, creaking slowly homeward. The drivers were curled up on their blankets asleep under the sheltering canvas hoods, leaving horse or donkey to take the road for itself. Being still new to the ways of burros, I kept a warning finger on the horn. So we sped in blaring publicity through the fringe of Barcelona and Badelona and out into the rich *huerta* of market gardens which lies for many miles north of the city. Later we grew to have a deep respect for Spanish horses and Spanish burros. True, they have a way of preferring the left side of the road, but with the approach of a motor, they move, without haste but obediently, to one side; and this whether the driver sleeps, walks at their side, or is

properly on the job. Whips are not needed. Nor did we ever see one used. The animal responds to the voice and to its own instinctive common sense.

Catalan horses are sturdy, deep chested animals, bred for strength at the plow under the handsome brass ornamented harness with its many straps and buckles and rows of tinkling bells. The collars are further ornamented by a roll of sheepskin dyed black and tied with scarlet tapes like a bolster. Many of the horses, like the burros, wore triangular "tidies" of red and green and yellow worsted dangling over their noses.

Beyond Masnou we rounded a curve and came full on the Mediterranean — a wide sweep of blue that lapped idly on a beach where blue and green fishing boats with high, carved prows were drawn up on the sands.

A little more, and the strip of arable land between hills and sea narrowed. The coast grew rocky and steep. The road began to mount ever heightening cliffs from which one looked down on lonely coves separated by spurs of rock that were festooned with brown sea weed over which the gulls circled, mewing. From the face of the cliffs grew patches of prickly pear, cactus and tall aloes. Some of these shot their stout stalks fifteen feet into the air. Here and there stood a solitary dark stone pine.

This was the beginning of the Costa Brava. Northward around the Gulf of Roses to Port Vendre, the Roman Port Venus, where the Pyrenees tumble into the Mediterranean, the coast rises in sharp cliffs from the sea. The face is pitted with caverns into which only the most daring fisherman will bring his boat. The folklore of Cataluña peoples these shadowy caves with

strange Gothic monsters like the gargoyles that look down from the cathedral wall in Barcelona. Fishermen tell tales of voices heard at night calling from the cliffs, of lights that come and go and belong to no ship that sails. Somewhere hereabouts appeared that fire-breathing dragon sent by the Moors against the Christians. The Knight Villardel came forth to fight the beast and eventually killed it. But in a vainglorious moment, he waved his sword and boasted of his prowess. Whereupon a drop of the poisonous blood ran down the sword blade and killed the victor.

At the entrance to Arenys de Mar we drew up to ask about a hotel. Baedecker said laconically, "El Siglo, pension, 6 to 7 pesetas, variously spoken of." And our Baedecker was thirteen years old! We looked at El Siglo and hesitated. But dusk was coming on. Fifteen minutes before the road had been paved with sunshine. Now it was a lake of purple shadows. In another quarter of an hour the headlights would be needed.

As we hesitated, the village postman rounded the corner. In his official capacity as news gleaner and purveyor to the community, he stopped to survey with genuine Iberian curiosity first the insignia of the American Automobile Club on Ximena's radiator, then ourselves. Haltingly, we essayed our question.

Would he understand?

Wonder of wonders, he did! Not only did he understand, but he drew near and leaned confidingly on the side of the car the while he delivered himself of a flood of Catalan. I made out only two words frequently repeated: Monte Calvario.

However, his tone was reassuring, and his gestures motioned us on along the cliff road. And so we came in

the last five minutes of the sunset to our first Spanish inn. It was perched lonely on the cliff two kilometers from the village, with one foot in the sea and one arm thrown lovingly about a tiny chapel which bore the date 1584 over its sculptured doorway. Within, above the tarnished gilt altar hung a full size replica of the Christ of Lepanto. Around it were suspended votive offerings — little ships whittled out of wood with dusty sails, and crude paintings of storms at sea, of ships, and of sailors being welcomed home on the sea beach. An old woman, bent and gnarled and brown as some piece of driftwood that has suffered the passing of many tides, was telling her beads in one corner.

The inn's other arm developed into a dancing pavilion with a bar across one end, rows of empty wicker arm chairs and a phonograph that whined *Valencia*. Such was the GRAN HOTEL RESTAURANT MONTE CALVARIO, obviously a place where motorists out for a drive from Barcelona stopped for suppers of *langoustas*, or in the summer months, to bathe. Now, in February, it was deserted. We crossed the tiny drawbridge that spanned the deep cleft between highroad and inn over the railroad tracks.

La señora made a gratifying fuss of welcome over us. One son hastened to put on his waiter's collar and imitation shirt front, the other staggered up the stairs with our bags. Two pretty little chambermaids, also of the family, scampered up and down the corridor, and from the kitchen, doubtless Papa's domain, came the sound of a knife being sharpened against our dinner.

We dined on *langoustas*, the delicious Mediterranean lobster. Not, alas, *al americano*, which famous recipe is said to have been originated here. We would

have liked to have tasted for ourselves and judged — is there, or is there not, a dash of chocolate in the sauce?

We slept that night in a room that opened on three sides to the sea. Only the door and a long silent corridor tied us to the mainland. All night the tideless surge of the waves against the cliff filled our ears. The old moon came up very late and shone full in upon us, and just before the dawn, great Venus rose out of the eastern sea, luminous and lovely with the promise of the day. I hung over the balcony and watched the fishing fleet put out to meet it. Their lateen sails shone pearly white against the pink flush in the east.

When we came downstairs after breakfast, the little maid was putting fresh flowers in the chapel. She left her blossoms to lead us down a flight of spume-wet steps out into the face of the rock under the hotel to the sea's edge. In a natural reservoir was the morning catch of *langoustas*, two dozen fine, green crustaceans. With the guest ringing at the gate, the *señora* had only to put on the pot and then let down a net for the dinner!

Beyond Arenys de Mar the shore grew more ruggedly picturesque. Between the rocky headlands lay silent, white sanded coves that invited one to bathe though this was February. There was just the sun, the sea wind, the white sand, the blue Mediterranean and us.

What villages there were, lay below us in the coves, completely isolated one from another by the steep promontories between. Each is a law and a universe unto itself. Each carries forward its own tradition as this has come down from the days when Charlemagne drove the last Moor south of Llobregat. Babies are sung to sleep with ballads that owe their origin to the troubadours of Provence. There are no summer

visitors, no tourists, no foreigners, and a foreigner is anyone not Catalan.

Into these isolated hamlets came Roger de Flor preaching his crusade against Constantinople. He led away with him to the East hundreds of Catalans who planted Count Wilfred's arms under the walls of Santa Sophia.

San Pol de Mar lay in a cup between the highroad and the sea. One had the sensation of driving over the roofs of the town. The brown houses scrambled helterskelter up and down the cliffs, the roof of one house making a terrace for its neighbor. A line of diminutive grey donkeys picked their way up the stony path. Their wide straw panniers were filled with sea weed going to fertilize the fields. Everywhere brown and ochre nets were spread to dry. Men and women squatted on the doorsills mending the seines, or tying rows of fish hooks to the edges.

Our destination was San Feliú de Guixols, one of the largest of the Costa Brava villages, on its own harbor which is the port for Gerona, forty kilometers inland. As the sea gulls fly, it is on a straight line from San Pol de Mar, but the coast road between was built for donkeys not motors, even motors of Ximena's undemanding ways. At Malgrat, the blue and white sign ordered us peremptorily inland. The road followed the winding Tordera which disappointed our expectation of Spanish rivers by having water in it, enough water to spread over the road in one low spot so that we sloshed through it musically. The river twisted a way for itself and us through the uplands.

As we climbed higher, the farms gave way to forests of cork trees, each with its trunk neatly stripped for a

depth of five feet or more. An obliging tree which may be denuded every seven years! Carts piled high with slabs of bark were going down to San Feliú and the ships there. Most of these were drawn by three animals, a horse in the shafts, next a mule, and a wise looking donkey in the lead. The harness bells tinkled musically in the thin, clear air.

Dusk was falling as we dropped down the long hill into San Feliú. Behind us the sunset flamed red, before us was a purple harbor in which three or four ships rode at anchor. From San Feliú cork is shipped all over the world. The village straggled unevenly up the hill from the beach, but along the water front was a wide promenade with our hotel, and a park with palm trees and aloes in flower. The fishing boats were drawn up on the sands, their brown sails furled. Their names were reminiscent of Philip's Armada — La Concepción; Santa Eulalia: Light of the Sea. One had a likeness of a saint painted on the bow, with two sportive dolphins under her feet.

It was our friend, the English Philosopher, who first told us about San Feliú. Three years before, he and his wife had turned the key in their Surrey cottage, and came to live in a tall white house that has the Mediterranean at its front door and a walled garden full of violets at the back — a house with an upstairs study where the Philosopher can sit among his books with his feet on a *brasero* full of glowing coals and his head in the sun. And does Mrs. Philosopher wish cabbage, oranges, almonds or octopus for dinner, she has only to lean over the balcony and hiss through her teeth, since all of these at any moment of the day are sure to be going by.

Because it was Lent, we missed the *sardana*, the folk dance of Cataluña. They dance it in San Feliú on most Sundays in the dusty promenade between the houses and the sea. The dancers, men and women, stand in a circle, stamping and bobbing in a curious rhythmic dance that is not Spanish at all. John of Gaunt saw this and the similar dances of Galicia when he came to claim the crown of Castile, and introduced them into England as Morris (Moorish) dances. They are not Moorish at all, but Provençal.

The music is furnished by a primitive orchestra of eleven pieces. One musician plays four instruments including a small drum which is fastened to his elbow. The tiny wooden piccolo which furnishes the dominant high note is purely Catalan in origin.

The *sardanas* are Cataluña's chief diversion all through the year. Sometimes, late at night, or rather in the early morning hours, one finds a circle of workingmen and peasant girls dancing under the arc lights of Barcelona's Paralello. *La Voz de Cataluña*, the liberal newspaper, carries notices of the place and time of public *sardanas*, sandwiched between death notices and business advertisements.

The Iberian calender keeps three great festal seasons — Carnival, Holy Week, and Corpus Christi Day. Carnival is of the world worldly. The Church looks on unrebukingly, and smiles, knowing Ash Wednesday to be only three days off. The *semana santa* is religion's hour. Then, if ever an Anglo-Saxon may, one comes close to understanding the ecstasy which moved Spain's saints, Loyola and Dominic and Theresa, *mistica doctora y la gloria de España*, as the inscription above her house in Seville proclaims her to be.

Christmas, which looms so large in our calenders, is kept in the churches, but without the accompaniment of gift giving. And Santa Claus has never crossed the Pyrenees. The children of Spain keep Epiphany, *La Fiesta de los Reyes*. At this time, especially in Cataluña, *pastorettes*, long musical games, are played in which the children enact the story of the Wise Men's visit to Bethlehem. Music and words have their origin in mediæval songs of Provence.

*"El camino de Belén
pocos son los que lo ven.
Los buscamos noche y día
llena el alma de alegría.
Lo buscamos sin cesar
que no es fácil de encontrar.

Una estrella que lució
va guiando nuestros pasos
Una estrella que lució
a los Magos orientó.
¿Quién nos quiere acompañar
a esperar los Santos Reyes?
¿Quién nos quiere acompañar
a los Magos esperar?"

So singing, the children begin their search for the Three Wise Men. They go about among the elders and beg eggs and flour wherewith to mix a cake, and this baked, they divide and eat it, leaving a little on a plate by the open window, where the Kings may taste of it as they pass. Still singing, they take off their wooden shoes and set them by the hearth before they go

to bed, confident that while they are sleeping the Three Kings will come, eat of the cake, and in gratitude, leave gifts of flowers and sweetmeats in the waiting sabots — as is foretold in the chorus:

'Los Reye vienen
Los Reyes van.
El plato a la ventana
cada año encontrarán.
El plato a la ventana
los zuecos al hogar.
La vida pasa aprisa
mas siempre hay que esperar."

In Seville, the Andalusian love of pageantry has added a street procession of the Kings and their retinue followed by a cart filled with toys which are distributed in the city's hospitals and orphanages:

* On the road to Bethlehem
Few are they that go,
Day and night we seek Him there,
Night and day we there repair,
Joyously we seek the King,
Merrily our praises bring.

A star shines bright
To guide our feet,
A star shines bright
The Kings to greet.
Who goes with us
The road they went —
The holy kings
Of Orient?

CHORUS

The kings come,
  The kings have been,
The dish at the window
  Each year they have seen.
The dish at the window,
  The shoes by the fire —
They fail not to bring us
  Whate'er we desire.

At this time, too, in the homes are set out the crêches, and around the central persons of the Nativity scene, are ranged all sorts of lesser figures: the Three Kings, shepherds and water carriers, an old woman with a spindle, a soldier, a knight on a prancing charger, a fisherman, a sailor, and a gypsy who, according to legend, crept into the stable while Jesus slept and stole the gifts the Three Kings had brought:

(1) En el Portal de Belén
Gitanitos han entrado
Y al niño recien nacido
Los pañalos le han quitado.
  Picaros Gitanos!
Caras de aceitunas*
No han dejado al niño
Ropa ninguña.

(1) In the gate of Bethlehem
Little gypsies have come in*
From the Holy Babe new born
All the covers they have drawn*
  Wicked gypsies!

With their sullen faces!
They have left the Infant King
Naked there, and shivering.

One finds these tiny figures for sale in the shops. Usually they are of plaster and colored gaudily, but in a back street of San Feliú I saw Three Kings carved out of cork wood and painted in soft purples and green and gold. Three little Wise Men presiding over a motley collection of ship chandler's stores. Within the shop an old woman sat beside a basket of cork which she was cutting into bottle stoppers. She did not look up, and her hands never paused in their task. Her husband, one of those handsome husbands for whom, it would seem, Nature never fails to provide a good and plain woman to find happiness sufficient in working for him — came forward to wait on me.

"The Three Kings?"

He took them from the window shelf and set them on my outstretched palm — Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. Caspar had a tall gilt staff with lanthorn atop, Balthazar a coffer with three coral beads, and Melchior knelt to present a tiny gilded chalice.

The old man pointed from them to his wife with a gesture of proprietorship. She had made them.

"How much for the Three Kings?"

Only then did the old woman look up. Husband and wife exchanged a glance. Then he named a price —

I shook my head.

Well, what would I pay?

I mentioned a sum approximately half of his, but based on what I knew plaster figures of similar size were worth, and a little more.

What, only so much for the Three Kings? The old man took them indignantly out of my hand and thrust them back in the window. He went over and stood by his wife, and laid one hand on her bent shoulder in the protector's attitude. She did not raise her head. Only her gnarled brown fingers went on peeling, cutting, dropping the finished corks into the basket at her knee.

That the *señorita* would offer so small a price for the Three Kings! The very ones who had visited *el niño* Jesus and His Blessed Mother in the stable of Bethlehem! And such *bonito* kings as these were! *Muy bonito!* Carved by an artist, no less . . .

And much more of the same order.

Abashed, I murmured something vaguely apologetic and went out. From the street, I stopped to look into the window, The Three Kings had their backs to me. I fancied I could read their silent disapproval.

"*Señorita* . . ."

The old man had followed me out. He shut the shop door cautiously behind him. His eyes were no longer accusing, but cunning . . .

La señorita would pardon him . . . It was she, he pointed backward with his thumb. "She, *la vieja*, who was so greedy for money that she was never satisfied. No, not even with enough. But let the *señorita* tell him the best price she would give for the Three Kings, and he would undertake to persuade his old woman . . ."

I added five *pesetas* to my former offer, and he winked at me, laying one finger to the side of his nose, and disappeared within the shop. In a moment a hand appeared in the window. The Three Kings were taken down from the shelf. I counted the *pesetas* into his palm, with one over — he was a handsome man. His

fingers closed on them greedily. We parted with an exchange of compliments. As I turned the corner I saw him, the beret set rakishly atop his handsome head, stepping forth adventurously toward the Café Catalá down the street.

The Philosopher had saved Tossa for us as a *bonne bouche*. There is a road that leads to it by various winding stages out of Llagostera through cork forests that were carpeted in February with wild thyme and rosemary and lavender. Spanish soil is the natural home of all the herbs.

But if one is reasonably sure footed and not too short of breath, the best way of approach is by the path over the cliffs. From a precarious foothold on the rocks, one looks down into clear wells of green sea water in which pink and mauve anemones sway fragilely with the tide that is so slight that mariners who sail the Atlantic say the Mediterranean has no tide at all. It has, but the difference is one of quarters of inches, not feet. The fathomless submerged caverns along the cliff are the home of octopi and devil fish.

Once Greek and Roman villas crowned these heights. Only a week before, a fisherman of Tossa had brought up in his net an alabaster vase whose fine Grecian shapeliness was still discernible through the encrustation of the sea.

Tossa fits snugly into its tiny cove. There is just room enough between the two jutting headlands, the connecting cliff and the sea for a scramble of low white houses. Streets are out of the question when everything is a matter of ups and downs, when one man's house wall is another man's roof, when one clambers down a

ALONG THE COSTA BRAVA

SAN FELIÚ LIES SNUGLY IN ITS HARBOR

DANCING THE SARDANA — CATALUÑA

rock staircase over spreadings of orange calendulas to find the way blocked by a blue fishing boat with the family washing pinned to the rigging to dry. But it is a paradise for goats. The tinkle of their bells sounds all day from the cliffs above the roofs of the village.

An eleventh century watch tower crowns the promontory to the south. It was one in Cataluña's chain of defenses against the Saracen pirates of Majorca. These were in the habit of making raids on the coast villages, carrying away the handsomest girls and the treasures of the churches. Apparently, it did not occur to Cataluña to follow the simple expedient of Castile which purchased immunity by sending the Caliph of Cordoba fifty maidens for his harem each year!

The industry most evident in Tossa was the weaving of lobster pots. These were enormous, fully as big as Ximena, and of a shape resembling a Chinese pagoda. Necessarily, they are made in the open while the maker sits on his door sill like a human spider.

We drank our afternoon coffee at the village café which had its tables set out on the white sands. We were drawn to the spot by the aroma of coffee being roasted in a tin cylinder over a pan of coals. How often in Spain are one's nostrils teased by that most enticing of perfumes! How often, too, alas, is one's palate — especially if it be an American palate — disappointed by the tincture that passes by the name! The beans are roasted with sugar which burns them very black and imparts a scorched taste. The grinder in this instance was a burly man with fierce mustaches under his scarlet *barretina*. From the top of his magenta sash protruded a large knife of a sort known locally as a "mother-in-law killer."

A group of fishermen came up from the boats and sat at the next table. One boy with a blue shirt open over his bronzed chest and a mop of curly hair under a weather stained *barretina* might have been Guimera's Manelich.

He was not altogether unaware of his own picturesqueness for presently he leaned far back in his chair, flung back his head and began to sing the *Song of the Cat Fountain.* It is one of the fundamental stories of mankind, it would seem, for every race sings its own version of it. It is the old, sad story of a maiden and her false lover, and their trysts by the "Fountain of the Cat." Every village in Cataluña lays jealous claim to the ballad, and every village well is the identical "Cat Fountain" where it all happened.

The song over, the singer bowed to our applause and refreshed himself with a long draught of wine from the glass drinking bottle that went the rounds. Properly, it was green glass, for these were fishermen. White glass bottles are for landsmen, and the distinction is rigorously observed. The approved method is to hold the bottle above one's head so that the tip of the spout is at least six inches from the lips and pour the wine in a thin stream straight down one's throat. Obviously, it takes practice to do this. To stop the stream once started requires little less than sleight of hand. It is Spain's gesture toward modern hygiene. The bottle passes from man to man but never from lip to lip.

Coming back to San Feliú we found the town en fête. Another saint's day! That night there were fireworks and music under the windows of our hotel, and a surge of fisherfolk up and down the promenade until long after midnight.

"The Catalan is a born musician," the Philosopher told us. "He sings constantly; more than that, he sings well. Not the wild *jotas* of Andalusia, but his own ballads and the *classica*, which he has heard in the opera house, or the Orfeo Catalan in Barcelona."

He put a record on the phonograph, and brought the instrument close to the open window. In a moment the pure, high voice of an English choir boy singing: "Oh, For the Wings of a Dove!" filled the room. In those surroundings, the music so reminiscent of northern Sundays was startling. Outside, the vivid blue sea and sky, the curve of yellow sands and headland, the blue and green boats, the trot, trot of donkeys' feet on the stones, the long drawn cry of the milkman: "*Le-e-che de c-a-a-bre.*"

Inside, that passionless, cool soprano.

The Philosopher pointed to the window. "Look."

From beach and market had gathered some twenty men and boys. They stood quite still, listening intently. Two fish wives, poising broad willow trays of *pulpi* on their heads, a priest in a dusty soutane, the postman, and the crumpled little vendor of lottery tickets joined the group. A carter drew his mule up short, and stood up in his cart the better to hear.

The voice climbed higher, higher; drew itself out in a thin, silver stream, and was still. The listening group fell apart with murmurs of: "*Muy bonito!*" The carter shouted to his beast, the vendor of lottery tickets recommenced his whine, and the fish wives, seeing the "inglesi" on the balcony held out their baskets, crying that most universal of Spain's street cries: "*Barato! Barato! Barato!*"

CHAPTER FOUR

"FORD"ING THE PYRENEES

WE SAID farewell to the Costa Brava on a gay morning. A crisp breeze ruffled the Mediterranean and filled the sunburnt orange sails of the fishing boats as these stood away around the headland. Sea and sky and sand and white houses twinkled in the sunshine. So, too, did the fish market spread along the Rambla under the plane trees. There had been a miraculous draft of sardines the night before and the price that morning was proportionately low. Fifteen pesetas for a basket. About one bushel, we estimated.

The road for Gerona took us inland and upland, through a valley of small farms and cork woods and vineyards and olive groves. A little narrow-gauge railway ran along beside the highroad, San Feliú's and Palamos' link with the great world. We were companied by many carts, that creaked stolidly over the stones. Those going eastward, were laden with slabs of cork bark; those going westward, our way, piled high with brown sea weed. We carried the clean tang of the sea with us into Gerona.

It was market day when we arrived there, and drew Ximena up sharply on the bridge that crosses the Oñar for a long look at the city. It rises steeply from the river bank with its graciously arched bridges to the high

climax of its Gothic cathedral. The river fronts of the houses are hung with ramshackle wooden balconies that lean crazily over the waters. Three streams come together under those bridges, the Oñar, the Ter, and the Guell. Four, if one counts the little Galligans which is there to be counted only in spring when the melting snows give it life.

On the wide dry shoals beneath the bridge were parked the donkeys and carts that had brought in the market. The market itself was spread all along the embankment in a multi-colored confusion of oranges, cabbages, wreaths of onions, artichokes and fish commingled with lengths of gay calicos, blankets, sashes, *alpagartas*, tinsel jewelry, brooms, tinware! — Is there anything in the world that one cannot find in a Spanish market? There was much of the native Catalan pottery which is made of brown clay overlaid with a buff glaze. The bowls had crude designs in the bottoms — carnations, stars, fish, and one, a ship with bellying sails.

Each province of Spain has its own pottery. That of Valencia is a vivid yellow, highly glazed, with splashes of green — the color of her own orange groves. At Cordova, we found bowls and platters of grey clay ornamented with geometric designs in blue and yellow and green. Toledo makes a terra cotta ware, some of it with conventional designs pricked into the clay before it is fired. Galician potters turn out jugs and bowls of yellow clay which they overlay with an olive green glaze that burns smokily where it comes in contact with the embers of the potter's fire. We found an entrancing close-lipped jug of this ware in the Sunday market at Padrón — but that came later.

Here at Gerona's market our eyes were taken by the crude wooden harness — ox yokes painted bright delphinium blue with splashes of crimson and orange; and saddles, also made of wood, with curved ends to keep the straps in place. These were painted dark blue or green, and the curved pieces showed figures of horses and horsemen, in black and yellow. If only Ximena had had four feet instead of four wheels!

The crowd was thickest about the bridge head where a stout country woman was frying *buñolas* in a great copper kettle full of smoking oil. With one dexterous turn of the wrist she took a handful of batter from the stone crock on the coping, pressed it into some semblance of a circle, drove her thumb through the centre to make the hole, and dropped the resultant "cruller" into the hot oil. Who has not eaten a Catalan *buñola*, straight from the frying, crisp and hot, has not known the possibilities that lie in those kettles of boiling oil whose reek winds and twines through the stalls of every market place on a market day. Only, of *buñolas*, as of pork pies, it is well to "know the lady as makes 'em."

Gerona is one of the gems of Spanish hill towns, a slightly tarnished gem, dark and dirty and mysterious. Its narrow streets turn unexpected corners and bring the unwary driver suddenly upon a flight of steps up which nothing less sure-footed than a donkey would venture. Grim old palaces with heavily sculptured façades stand guard over the past.

The Goths disputed Gerona with the Romans, the Moors with the Goths. Then came Charlemagne riding down through the Cerdagne and made it the central city of the Franche Comté. The Carolingian tradition lingers about it still. For centuries Gerona

was one of the keys to Spain, a key for which France just over the mountain wall, had an itching palm. Napoleon's conquest of the peninsula brought its severest trial. For seven months a tiny garrison reinforced by three hundred Ulster volunteers under the gallant O'Daly kept Duchesne's army at bay. When at last the walls fell, it was disease and famine that conquered, not the French. The siege gave Goya subjects for his most powerful cartoons. Gerona enjoys the proud distinction of having endured twenty-five sieges, of having yielded to only four. It gave title, too, to the King of Aragon's eldest son — Count of Gerona.

There was a tiny terrace garden behind our hotel. Above the wall, which was over-grown with fuschias, we could see the tower of San Feliú, one of the three Romanesque churches for which Gerona is justly famed. That "fine truncated" spire charmed the much travelled Augustus Hare more than all things else in Cataluña's hill city. The church has a high altar made of six antique sarcophagi. Four by their carvings are early Christian; the other two frankly pagan. The priest celebrates the Christian mysteries before a lion hunt and the Rape of Proserpine.

The cathedral, another La Seo as all of Charlemagne's founding were, crowns the height of Montjuich on the site of Emir Sulieman's mosque which Charles cleansed so drastically. Legend says that St. Paul and St. James, journeying into Spain, made this their first resting place. From here St. Paul turned southward to Andalusia, while St. James went westward through Zaragoza to Galicia.

The present church dates from the fourteenth century. One climbs to it pantingly up a flight of eighty-

six steps that mount the steep between the tiny plaza and the terrace on which La Seo stands. Two priests were strolling there in the sun reading their breviaries and stopping from time to time to look out over the tumble of brown roofs to the mountain line. A workman in blue denim overalls sprawled face downward on the uncompromising stones taking his *siesta*.

A well fortified fifteenth century campanile dominates the valley of the Oñar. It provided asylum once for Queen Joan Henriquez and the young Ferdinand.

From the platform beneath the swinging bells, one looks down to the harbor of San Feliú and the sea, southward over rolling green country to the serrated rocky mass of the Montseny and Montserrat, and westward and northward to Puigcerda and Canigou and the "high peaks hoar" of the Pyrenees. The shepherds in far upland pastures take warning of time and season from Gerona's bells.

In those valleys France and Spain meet and join hands. And lo, both are Catalan. Tongue, dress, customs are the same on both slopes of the dividing mountain wall.

Higher in the hills beyond Puigcerda lies Andorra, the only valley which has retained the old independence that was once the possession of them all. And still further, reaching out of France into Spain like an inquiring finger, is that romantic Val d'Aran beloved of Mr. Belloc's Wandering Peter:

> " Then shall I spread my native wings
> And tread secure the heavenly floor,
> And tell the Blessed doubtful things
> Of Val d'Aran and Perigord."

Perhaps, doubtful things are the easiest to tell. I

A VILLAGE IN THE PYRENEES

THE CHURCH OF PUIGPARDINAS — LOOKING TOWARD THE PYRENEES

GERONA'S CATTLE FAIR ON THE SHOALS OF THE OÑAR

had gone into the cathedral to admire the magnificent width of its Gothic nave, the widest in Christendom. The afternoon sun threw the pattern of the great western rose window on the pavement so that the feet of a mere writer of books were dipped in scarlet and blue and gold.

Guillermo Boffly, who designed the nave, was the modern of his day. Bishop and Chapter stood aghast, not a little shocked, at the temerity of this craftsman who claimed to be able to build a Gothic nave without supporting aisles and seventy-four feet wide. An expanse wider by eleven feet than that of the great church of Toulouse. They called a council of architects to examine his plans. The architects shook their heads; they doubted but could not disprove. The Bishop, however, had more than a drop of sporting blood. He gave the order to go ahead.

Guillermo did not live to see the realization of his dream in stone. One hundred and sixty years were consumed in the building. But it stands today, faith's unchallenged gesture in the face of doubt.

It was of Guillermo I was thinking as I walked under his magnificent arches. Someone touched me on the arm. It was the sacristan in a long cassock of scarlet cloth. A bunch of heavy keys swung from his leather girdle. He jangled them suggestively. "Did I wish to see the cloister?"

With much clanking of metal, he unlocked a low door in the northwest wall. It led into the cloisters which are all that remains of the earlier Romanesque cathedral. Their exact age is unknown, but Bishop Berenguer, writing a pastoral letter to his flock in 1117 dated it "From the cloister of Gerona"!

The cloister is curiously irregular, with no two sides of equal length. The French builders must have fitted it into an angle between other older buildings long since vanished, and hurried at their task to be back safely across the Pyrenees before friendly relations were again disestablished. Perhaps they left for their easier egress the tiny door in the northwest wall that gives on a path leading directly to the city walls and the old gate toward France.

I paused to examine more closely a group of capitals on which was carved a realistic presentation of the Creation and Fall of Man. The sacristan drew near and pointed with expressive finger to the chief characters in the story.

I nodded, but my nod was not enough. He shook his head at me pityingly and, not in words, but in pure pantomime, began to recount the story which is contained in the second chapter of Genesis.

With his hands folded submissively and his head laid sidewise upon them, he was the sleeping Adam, all unconscious of the trouble being created for him out of his own rib. Solemnly, with long drawn mouth, he was the Lord God. Coquettishly, he was the mother of us all.

I leaned against the cloister wall, and gave the artist his due, not of applause, but of interest in the story he unfolded. The tremendous drama held us both. It was, I murmured, truly *maravilloso!*

There was another sacristan of Gerona who travelled down from his hill city to that conference of the churchmen and *ricos hombres* of Cataluña that met to consider plans for the conquest of Majorca from the Moor. When the archbishop and bishop and well-conditioned abbots had each pledged men and ships and gold to the

crusade, he stood up, last of all, to say that though he was beside these other great ones only a poor man, still his zeal for the spread of the truth was no less than theirs. Out of his savings he would equip ten knights.

Other times, other manners. I can testify that the missionary zeal of the sacristans of Gerona does not grow less. Whether their purses are less well lined, I cannot say, but I gave mine, not the one peseta prescribed by the guide book, but two, and felt myself still in his debt.

We wound our way out of Gerona with a tank full of gasoline and two extra tins of five litres each among the luggage in the back. The useful mile-stone gas station of America is conspicuous by its absence in Spain. Even at the garages in the towns, the proprietor locks up at one o'clock and goes home and presumably to sleep until three. We did not intend to risk sharp upgrades with a low tank.

The road was excellent, not macadam, but strong red earth, well banked and running above the fields.

A brown walled village nestled against the side of the hill like a tired child against its mother. We looked down on tiled roofs thatched over with moss and tufts of white flowered garlic. Almond and peach trees in spring bloom veiled the hamlet in a rosy haze.

To the right opened the valley of the Ampurdan. It was famous for its wines when Hannibal came marching by over the very road that was ours. There was a Greek colony at the sea's edge, an offshoot from Marseilles. Wine and olives and scarlet dye were shipped thence to the East. In the cloister of San Pedro in Gerona we had seen fragments of sculptures, glass and

pottery from the Greek and Roman villas that stood here.

A tall church with the open belfry in which the bells hung free, as is the custom throughout Cataluña, and a gathering of brown houses, was Bascara. A tiny river wandered through the village crossed by a bridge of many arches. It seemed strange that so small a stream should have need of so wide a girdle until we remembered the Spring freshets that go rushing down these dry river beds with amazing fury.

Just south of the bridge, a *Guardia Civile* popped out of a wooden salt box beside the road and held up his hand.

"Would the *señoras* show the car's papers?"

We would and did.

He bore them away to an unseen officer concealed within the salt box, and returned on a run to enjoy the delights of conversation with us. We were *inglesi?* No; Americans; from New York!

But New York had nothing on Bascara. The Wooden Soldier squinted at us engagingly. Was it perhaps close to Rio de Janeiro? He had a brother there. For himself, he was not Catalan. Indeed, no. He was *valenciano.* Ah, Valencia — he pressed his chubby fingers together, pressed them fervently to his lips, and threw the resultant kiss southward — "the land of flowers."

From within the salt box a whistle sounded. Our soldier popped to obey the summons. In a moment he was back with the papers. We were free to go.

We speeded out of Bascara over Hannibal's bridge, leaving our Toy Soldier gazing wistfully after us. These American habits of hurry!

The *reyes catholicos* founded the *Santa Hermandad*

(Holy Brotherhood) for the protection of travellers. From this pious beginning has grown Spain's present system of Civil Guards. They go invariably by twos, Tweedledum and Tweedledee! Shiny, black leather tricorn hats, turned up smartly at the back, are to be seen at every railway station, at every gathering. Their presence makes the highways of Spain far safer for the lone female motorist than are many American state roads. In a country where everyone must carry papers of identification and show them on demand, there are no wandering suspicious characters.

The thirty-five kilometers into Figueras were a gradual upgrade all the way. We were mounting higher and higher into the foothills of the Pyrenees. Midway we climbed a rise, rounded a turn and had a full view of snow-capped Puigcerda through the blossomimg boughs of an almond orchard beside the road.

It was our event of the day. We rested that night in Figueras where a sullen, sloe-eyed beauty in dangling Catalan ear rings set with amethysts brought the hot water and poured our morning tincture of coffee and boiled goat's milk into white china bowls. We had, perforce, to break the hard rolls into it and spoon them up, in nursery fashion.

A dreary town, Figueras, set about an open square with linden trees under which the Sunday market is held, and where the townspeople and soldiers from the garrison "ramble" in the evenings and up to two A.M., making early hours to sleep impossible.

As we lay straining for slumber, we heard under our window a rhythmic tap! tap! on the cobblestones, and at intervals a long drawn cry. It was *el sereno*, the night watchman, making his rounds. His tall staff

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with the lanthorn atop, struck the stones before his stealthy feet. Every hour he made his circuit, calling the time and the weather: "*A las tres, y sereno.*"

Because most Spanish nights are serene, their crier is known by the word most frequently on his lips.

El sereno is useful in more ways than one. He carries extra keys to the houses on his route for the benefit of those locked out after hours. He may be called upon, too, in cases of illness or death to fetch the doctor or the priest.

Luncheon in France! That was the goal we had set ourselves in leaving Figueras.

This meant that we must reach the frontier at Le Perthus and cross the pass — the same by which Hannibal brought his army and his twenty elephants on that amazing march on Rome, about noon. And we did. With a clear road, and a fresh wind blowing, we spun the kilometers out behind us. It was lonely, barren country, this approach to the heights. The poor pasturage nourished small flocks of sheep and goats, tended by old men, wrapped from nose to arm pits in woolen mufflers. To the Catalan, his muffler is the most indispensable part of his attire. He may be hatless; he seldom boasts a coat; his trousers may be rags, and his *alpagartas* in the last stages of dissolution, but if he has a muffler to twist about his throat with ends to tuck under his arms, he faces the wind on the heath, or the storm at sea with confidence.

Somewhere in this desolate region the highwayman, Roque Guinert, played host to Don Quixote, and initiated the Knight into the ways of honest brigandage. Roque was a real person, and his descendants were

many. One reads of coaches being held up hereabouts even up to the closing years of the last century. How forbidding this first view of Spain must have seemed to white-cheeked Blanche of Bourbon as she rode down into it, the promised bride of Pedro the Cruel. Small wonder that her frightened eyes took courage from the face of the King's brother riding beside her litter. Tristan and Iseult. At least the King and "that witch with almond eyes," Maria Padilla, plotting in the Alcazar in Seville, made of the rumor grounds sufficient for sending the Prince posthaste to Portugal and imprisoning Blanche in the gloomy fortress castle of Talavera. There, later, she was beheaded.

The only drawback we encountered was the road itself, which, on this final stretch, was execrable. With four wheels to think for, it was impossible to keep clear of the holes. Heaps of stones, laid not beside the road but on it, thereby cutting the driving width one-third, promised relief — *mañana.*

At La Junquera, a village six kilometers below the top of the pass, more *Guardia Civiles.* They lounged picturesquely before a rough stone church that had an outside staircase leading to its bells, and the date 1413 on the door. Passports this time, and a warning that at the frontier there would be questions about the car.

Before us the mountain wall, which a distance back had seemed impassible, showed a surprising deep cleft — the Col de Perthus.

Through that narrow cleft had flowed how much of the history of Spain! Hannibal and his elephants marching on Rome; Caesar and Pompey and the Legion Hispaniensis; up the Silver Route from Cadiz had come the mule trains laden with minerals and wool and dyes

bound for the Eternal City. Then when Rome was old, came the Goths, pouring down through the sharp defile, and spreading in great fan-shaped phalanxes over Cataluña and Aragon and Castile. Still later, the Moors, pressing ever northward, crossed by this same pass into France and to defeat at Tours. Four conquering hosts have swept across the Spanish stage, had their day, and ceased to be. And Spain remains, unchanged, unchanging.

"*Ave Iberia!*" we cried, and saluted the last (first) kilometer stone on the road into Spain as we took the upgrade to the pass.

From the opposing heights, two castle forts frowned at each other. That to the right was France, to the left Spain. Louis XIV built the French Castle Bellegrade when Mazarin's diplomacy won him the Roussillon.

We began more slowly to climb the final ascent. On either side, the Col rises, the mountain wall forested thinly with scrub oak and pine. Patches of golden gorse blaze in the clearings.

It lacked twenty minutes of noon when we drew up at the Spanish *adouana* a few rods below the apex of the pass. Ximena's papers had to be shown and stamped. Our own came in for only a cursory examination, since the guards at La Junquera had approved them. After these, the baggage.

Had we cigarettes? Wine? Perfume? Lace? Silk?

"*Nada, señor.*"

"*Muy bien, y buen viaje, señoras.*"

With a bow Spain relinquished her hold on us. We drove the short distance that separated the two customs houses and were in France.

A STREET IN GERONA

THE TWELFTH CENTURY CLOISTER OF GERONA

Here we were met with a bewildering curiosity about Ximena's tires and the tins of gasoline, neither of which we had used. The staff gathered around us while a soldier crawled under the front axle and copied down numbers from some part of Ximena's anatomy. The lieutenant said briefly, "Fifty francs, madame," and with our note in his hand threw wide the door into France.

That descent of the Col de Perthus! The winding road is lashed to the mountain's side with a deep gorge at the left through which a mountain stream tumbles excitedly into the green County of Roussillon. The hillsides above our heads were thickly overlaid with golden gorse — later there would be among the gorse, the yellow flower of the broom, which the long ago princes of Plantagenet wore in their caps for a badge of the family. The broom is the flower of Cataluña. It blossoms richly on its hillsides, where the people cut it to strew in the streets before the Corpus Christi processions.

Down we went, down and down, twisting and turning as the road followed the curve of the mountain's face. Below stretched vineyards and farm lands greening now with the promise of Spring, and beyond, presiding over all like a benevolent, white-crested giant, Canigou.

The great peak towered magnificently over the lesser hills — the lonely spirit of the green Roussillon. Its flanks were clothed with deep woods from which the snow pinnacle rose more than nine thousand feet into the sky. Nearest us was the Peak of the Thirteen Winds. All of them must have been at home that day for through the glasses we saw a swirl and eddy of

glittering snow particles that wrapped the mountain's limbs like a dancer's scarf.

The wind that had followed us all that morning was freshening steadily. It drove dark, ominous looking clouds across the plain, the sunlight died away, and there was a sudden fierce patter of rain drops on Ximena's top.

The brook of Le Perthus had swelled now to sizable proportions. At the village of Le Boulou close to the foot of the mountain it hurried into the Tech and ran along under the garden walls — prim, diffident French garden plots, quite unlike the unruly gardens lying south of the Pyrenees, with budding pear and medlar trees against the walls, and tufts of pink-eyed daisies, and little proper gravel walks, all overhung now with the drooping gold of mimosa trees in flower.

Their ineffable sweetness went with us on our way along the broad straight highroad between the leafless poplar trees, and past many miles of vineyards, the vines pruned back thriftily to gnarled stumps two feet high.

The rain stopped now, as suddenly as it had begun. A timid sun ventured out between the cloud banks . . .

"Look!" cried the Good Sport.

From Canigou on our left, high over our heads, and coming to rest on the spires of Perpignan was a rainbow. We took it for a good omen as we drove Ximena under its glowing arch, through the ancient city gate with its fat, rose-colored round towers, and onto the broad boulevard along the canal.

The Pyrenees were crossed. We were in France.

CHAPTER FIVE

BY ROMAN ROADS

IT WAS mimosa gold that awaited us at the foot of the rainbow. The Place d'Arago was filled with it, the trees along the canal were golden bouquets, and not a man or woman passed but carried sprays of the fragrant yellow tassels.

The Spanishness of Perpiñan — the French put in the G to tide the Gallic tongue over the difficult Spanish Ñ — or its Frenchness, depends on the road by which one comes to it. Drive in over the wide plain of Languedoc across the moat, garden fringed now, but showing traces of rosy old brickwork that withstood sieges from France and Spain, turn and turn about, and one says at once: "How Spanish!" Tall, stooped houses frown down on the narrow streets. They wear their dark, overhanging upper stories like beetling brows.

But come to Perpignan as we came to it by the road out of Spain, past trim villas and sedate little *places*, and one says with certainty: "Here France begins!"

The streets in the old quarter where the Rue Voltaire becomes converted into the Rue de l'Ange are narrow and winding as those of the cities south of the Pyrenees. But they have an alertness, a smartness, an air of being filled all day with thrifty little businesses and being thriftily shuttered at night that is typically

French. The boulevard beside the canal with its mimosa grove was thronged with solid *petit bourgeois* walking dutifully between church time and Sunday dinner. They had none of the tattered insouciance of a Spanish holiday crowd. One missed the beggars and the lottery ticket sellers, the wandering bootblacks with their ever hopeful glances, even the deft-fingered old men pouncing on stubs of cigarettes before the light has gone out of them. There was not even the swagger of a cape.

Only the rosy red marble cathedral where Sancho, King of Majorca, Roussillon and Montpellier lies buried, and the castle which after Valldemosa was the asthmatic monarch's favorite residence, have kept faith with their Spanish past.

The Roussillon served Aragon as a convenient pawn. Was money needed for adventures in Navarre or the Indies or Peru, France was a willing creditor.

Business of this sort brought Ferdinand *el catholico* over the Pyrenees while Isabella lay dying in Medina del Campo. That he concluded the business to his satisfaction seems evident from his grim boast that he had worsted Louis XII twelve times.

The negotiations were not so engrossing that the Spanish monarch did not find hours to ride through the green lanes with red-haired Germaine, daughter of the Comte de Foix. He took her back with him to be queen in Aragon, and for her sake, had she borne him an heir, he would have wrecked the great achievement of his and Isabella's youth — a united Spain.

There was little about the castle to remind one of that courting. The great hall was long ago turned into a barracks. A regiment of coal black Algerian infantry-

men in khaki overcoats and scarlet fezes was quartered there. They had hung their accoutrements on the walls. The mailed fist which marks the spot on the ramparts where Charles V found a sentry asleep and pushed him into the moat as a matter of discipline, quite in keeping, one feels, with the imperial chin, supported a cage with a tiny, blear-eyed marmoset.

But the ponderous gateway with its inscription in honor of Philip II upheld by four caryatides was still intact. The four faithful female figures were all too suggestive of Philip's four wives — Portugal, England, France and Austria.

It had been our plan to take the road back into Spain by way of Narbonne and the coast, around the Gulf of Rosas. No one in Barcelona had been able to give us information about that route, save that there was one. Presumably, it came in with the railway at Port Bou. When we asked in Perpignan, we were met with vehement head shakings. There was a road, but nor for Fords, and *mesdames!* We must go back, as we had come, by the Col de Perthus.

How short a road once travelled becomes!

One night in Gerona, and one in Barcelona; gasoline, and oil, and letters from home; then we were ready to turn southward.

We had had a taste of travelling the Roman roads when we went northward into France. Now, the Michelin Guide set Ximena's tires along the same highroad whose stones rang under the wheels of Cæsar's chariots.

It was raining when we left Barcelona. From the boulevard along the heights we looked down on the city shrouded in grey veils.

Beyond the bridge where we halted at a grade crossing for a train to pass, we had our first glimpse of one of Spain's outdoor and indoor railway carriages. On seats along the roof a few passengers huddled under an inadequate umbrella. The traveller who waited with us eside the gates was more fortunate than they. He was an old man and fat; his cheeks bulged prosperously above the folds of his muffler. But for all his corpulence, he sat his donkey with an air, and held his blue cotton umbrella over himself, and his long *cigarillo* quite proudly.

It was uninteresting country through which the road took us. Not until we neared Castelldefels and the road began to mount the higher hills that front on the sea, had we any idea of the magnificence of this coast. Then the full spread of the Mediterranean lay below. The road clung high to the face of the cliff as we had followed it along the Costa Brava, with drops into the coves where fishing villages snuggled against the sheltering rock. Then, it rose once more to encircle the promontory from which one looked four ways at once — and all of them blue.

Sitges, a white town with villas; then the road left the cliffs and moved inland, though still within sight and smell of the sea. And there, quite lonely by itself, spanning the old road with the ancient pride of Rome, stood a majestic triumphal arch.

Reports of early travellers ascribe it to Lucius Sura who was a friend of the Emperor Trajan and like him, a Spaniard before he was a Roman.

What inscriptions there had been once along its inner wall are long since worn away. The masonry of its cornice is crumbling, tufts of grasses sprout between

the stones, and from high up on its once stern face, weathered now, and wrinkled, and softened by the passing of the centuries, a single scarlet poppy, "red, as where some vanished Cæsar bled," fluttered in the breeze.

It was our first clear warning that we, too, were pilgrims along the Roman road.

The great trade route of imperial Spain ran from Gades, the present Cadiz, northward over the long bridge of Merida through Salamanca to Astorga. There it joined the road coming eastward from La Coruña. From Astorga, the great artery cut directly across the high plain of Castile down the valley of the Ebro to Cæsaraugusta, which name has come down in the softening Spanish tongue as Zaragoza, to Tarraco on the Mediterranean. From Tarraco, the galleys sailed to the Italian shore. And from the city's north gate, another road ran northward under the arch of Lucius Sura through Cataluña, over the Pyrenees by the Col de Perthus, and so on to the gates of the Eternal City. That spur of the great highroad we had followed all the way from Perpignan.

Beyond the arch, and some kilometers nearer the city gate, one comes to a square masonry mass on a little grassy terrace to the right of the high road. Its corners are upheld by weather-beaten caryatides. The tomb of the brothers Scipio, so local pride would have it; adding that the founders of Tarragona ordered that their ashes should rest close to the road that ran up to the walls of their building.

One hesitates to discredit a story as romantic as this, especially when one has heard it from the not-to-be-doubted lips of a youthful goat herd, tending his flock

on the stony hillside that rises west of the Roman road. He saw us stop beside the ancient sculptured stones, and came down the hill on a run, brandishing his staff, and causing a moment's consternation among his charges, who fled, bleating. But his intent toward us was altogether kindly. We sat on the grassy terrace of the tomb and shared our bread and cheese and sardines with him.

"If it had been a professional guide who told you that," the Good Sport objects, "you would never believe it! You would say that the tomb is several centuries later than the second century B.C. That the caryatides are probably later still. . . That the Scipios were killed in battle somewhere near Teruel . . . But, because you hear all this from a romantically ragged small boy who lets his flock wander for the sake of a quarter of an hour's conversation with you . . . a small boy who cannot read or write, and who may, for all we know, think the Scipios were bull fighters — you are ready to believe anything he tells you."

Ah, well, suppose he did not know the Scipios' date or their record; suppose he did think them to have been bull fighters — the important fact remains that he knew them, in whatever century was theirs, to have been "*buen hombres*," and his countrymen.

The tomb — of the Scipios or of some other ancient Tarragonian, as one will — stands within sight of the city walls. Her walls are Tarragona's pride. The mighty blocks, twelve feet long and five feet high, are fitted together without mortar. The topmost layers are Augustan; the main body of the wall dates from the Scipios in the third century B.C. The foundations are Phœnician, Iberian — who can say?

TARRAGONA'S WALLS FROM THE NORTH

THE ARCH ON THE ROAD TO ROME

WITHIN THE CLOISTER OF POBLET

Here, in the winter of 26 B.C. came Cæsar Augustus himself, and rested magnificently, the empire being at peace. From Tarragona he issued his famous mandate which closed the gates of the Temple of Janus.

Tarragona, itself, was filled with the music of bugles. It is a garrison town. From our balcony we looked down into the hotel garden where two plump Aragonese laundresses were thumping the linen against the sides of a big stone trough, the while they exchanged doubtful compliments with a group of soldiers peering over the wall. We looked, too, into the barracks yard, and in at the window of the regimental barbershop. It was a disappointing "*Peluqueria*" this, for it lacked the distinguishing sign of barbers in Spain — the pair of small brass basins, with a bite out of the rims for the victim's neck to fit into, suspended over the door. It was a basin such as these that Don Quixote took for a helmet.

The bugles seemed to belong there. They added the proper martial touch. Tarragona is so much more Roman than it is mediæval, and this despite its mighty cathedral which has succeeded to the site of the temple to the Divus Augustus.

The west front of Tarragona's La Seo ends brokenly above the fine rose window whose blue and amber lights can be seen from the entrance to the harbor. But when one looks up at the great golden mass towering above the flight of steps, one is aware of no discrepancies. The heavily sculptured central portal with its rows of weather-beaten apostles, and the two small, round arched doors on either side are altogether satisfying. That to the right has the side of a Roman sarcophagus inset into the wall beside it, like a cartouche.

The archbishop of Tarragona is one of the Primates

of Spain. Between him and the Archbishop of Toledo there is a historic coolness. Each claims the superiority of his see.

Jaime the Conquistador is buried in the nave. His tomb of elaborately carved marble and alabaster is patched together from fragments of the earlier sepulchre at Poblet.

The cathedral, which is dedicated to Saint Tecla, a noble lady of Asia Minor who according to legend, accompanied the Apostle Paul on his missionary journey through Spain, is peculiarly rich in quaint carvings.

Most famous of all is the alabaster capital in the cloister which depicts the cat's funeral. A cat, feigning death, is carried to burial by a company of rats. At the edge of the grave, it revives suddenly and devours the bearers. The delicate chiseling is still beautifully clear. The figures flow rhythmically along the square top of the column. Doubtless, to the initiated, it conveyed some subtle topical meaning, seven hundred years ago.

From the battered reliefs of an altar dedicated to Saint Bartholomew, we deciphered the story of the original Peter Pan, the boy who refused to grow up. He, it seems, was a native of Tarragona. In twenty-five years he exhausted four nurses; their bodies lay about him on the floor. Then his parents called in the saint who exorcised the demon of perpetual youth, and Peter grew up to be a worthy citizen and a credit to his town.

The Scipios and Cæsar Augustus are not the only Roman great ones to whom Tarragona lays claim. There is also Pontius Pilate. He, they tell you, with a pride which a mere outsider finds hard to appreciate, dwelt in the square stone castle on the hill by the walls.

On this point Tarragona and Seville are in dispute. The Andalusian capital claims Pilate as a citizen, too.

Why Pilate, one wonders, when, by no greater prerogative, they might choose anyone else?

But, perhaps Tarragona feels its Roman past rather acutely. And, that it should not be too proud thereof, they have been given Pontius Pilate — for a warning.

We had a more extended view of the walls and battlements when we turned Ximena through the fortified west gate. Julius Cæsar marched his legions that way to fight with Pompey at Lérida. Not that we planned to go so far; only to Esplugas de Francoli, fifty kilometers along the Roman road to the ruins of the once magnificent monastery of Poblet.

The road ran swiftly down from the gate into the valley and then began to mount the opposite hill.

We paused at the top like good travellers to look back. The *puente del diavolo*, as the Spaniards call the Roman aqueduct, bridges the valley between the two green slopes. It antedates that of Segovia by two hundred years. For twenty-two miles, the conduit runs underground to emerge in this long unbroken span composed of two tiers of arches. Through them one looks northward toward the mountain ranges of Cataluña. A tiny stream trickled through the cup between the hills. On either side, the meadow was thickly starred with blooms of wild narcissi.

Westward, ahead of us, the road wound steadily upward into the hills which guard Aragon from the sea. The carts coming in to Tarragona jingled pleasantly. Curious faces peered at us round the edges of the curved hoods. *Tartanas*, large two-wheeled carts varnished yellow with wide-spreading canvas hoods and seats for

several persons along each side; farm carts piled with bundles of fagots and charcoal, their drivers sprawled flat on the load and so covered over with black and grey checked blankets and sheep skins against the early morning chill that the mules seemed to be taking their own way and without direction — all going down to Tarragona by the Roman road. On a curve we saw, several twists of the road ahead, a train of young mules — fourteen in all, tied tail to halter, being taken into Tarragona by two drovers. Fortunately, the men saw us coming. With loud cracking of whips and shouts, they drove the animals up the precipitous bank above the road into a thicket of gorse and rosemary. They snorted and danced and scuffed the loose dirt down on Ximena's top as we coasted by.

One shuddered at the thought of what might happen if the bank were to give way. Ten feet of road, and on the other side without any wall or embankment between, a drop of several hundred feet into the valley!

It had rained heavily during the night. The roadside sparkled fresh and shining and clean. We had congratulated ourselves on this piece of motorists' good luck until we came to Valls. There, before the first house of the town, the *carretera* ended abruptly. Beyond and stretching through the main street of the settlement, was a sea of yellow clay. We went in, nearly to the hub caps. But its wetness was our salvation. The car shivered and rocked and added her quota of spattering to the mud encrusted walls along the narrow way. The Good Sport held on tight, and the population of Valls thrust their heads out of doors and windows and called our progress to each other down the street.

At the village of Montblanch the road branched off into the hills to the north east to Santas Creus, that other monastery of Ramon Berenguer's founding. Like Poblet, it enjoyed royal favors and prerogatives. Blanche of Anjou who brought the French Benedictines into Cataluña and Aragon, and a new architectural movement with them, was its staunch patroness. She is buried there.

Royalties at Santas Creus are nearly put in the shade by the magnificence of the Moncadas. These greatest of all Barcelona's merchant princes, gave more than one son and one fortune to the abbey. Their "counters" are displayed as arrogantly as the stripes and links of chain of the royal arms.

Santas Creus is not deserted and empty like Poblet. When the monastic orders were evicted from France in 1903, the monks of the Grande Chartreuse took refuge here. They make their famous liqueur of Spanish grapes now in the old stone-vaulted wine cellars that date from the twelfth century.

The village of Montblanch had an old gate with a square tower and armorial bearings over the arch. Close beside it, stood a less picturesque but welcome gas station. While the litres were being pumped into Ximena's tank, four old crones came through the gate and hastened up to us. Each held out an importunate canvas bag. It was begging day. Each town in Spain sets apart one day a week when begging is permitted to the poor, and alms giving enjoined upon the rest. A simple solution, surely, for sociology's most pressing problem!

Esplugas de Francoli takes its name from the tiny river which winds through the valley. There we turned

off the Lérida road into a country lane through greening meadows. Presently, we came to an avenue of silver poplar trees.

The trees are a distinguishing feature of the site as they may have been in 1153 when Ramon Berenguer, not many months after his marriage, asked Abbot Vidal of Fontfroide in the Roussillon to send a company of monks to "my huerta de Poblet near Tarragona." *Huerta* means a well-watered market garden, and Poblet may well be derived from the "*pobos*," poplar trees. There is another story of a hermit named Poblet who dwelt in the valley when the Moors swept upward into Cataluña. When the invaders sought to drive him from his fields, he summoned to his aid such mighty angels and archangels that the invaders withdrew hastily and in fear, assuring the valley to him forever.

The hermit story has the proper touch, I admit. But then, there are the poplar trees. . . .

Past a lichened stone cross, the avenue led us up the slope to the village of half a dozen poor houses, and through the outer gate. Don Pedro of Aragon ordered the building of the wall in 1367. It encloses seventeen acres. All the peasants from as far away as Lérida had to come and work on it without pay, while his Majesty superintended in person.

Within, one faces across a narrow courtyard a second wall, of grey stone with a massive tower gate, the Puerta Dorada. It was built in honor of Ferdinand and Isabella's visit after the conquest of Granada. Half a century later, Philip II coming to spend a Holy Week here, ordered the wooden doors of the gate gilded. The legend of them passed through the countryside for pure gold.

The great doors swung idly as we drove Ximena through the arch that once reëchoed to the hooves of the *reyes catholicos'* chargers. Across the second courtyard, grass grown now and empty, rises the mass of monastery buildings, bastioned and fortressed like a mediæval castle. Out of the jumble of tiled roofs, the delicate stone lantern of the church lifts itself like a flower. The church turns a ponderous baroque façade toward the courtyard. Its portals are blind now, and filled up with stones.

We left Ximena beside the Tower of Fools, (one wonders whence the name) and pulled the bell rope beside the Puerta Real to summon the guardian. Poblet is now a national monument. One steps over the threshold into vaulted passages that seem more in keeping with men at arms than the white-robed brothers of St. Bernard. How many kings and queens of Aragon knocked at these portals! Ramon Berenguer and Doña Petronilla, Jaime the Conquistador in his proud young strength, his red hair flying free from under the heavy helmet. The night before he set sail for Majorca, he spent in prayer at the abbey and went down to the sea in the morning over the road we had just traversed. He had wished to end his days there, but death overtook him on the way, at Valencia. He left his plate to the Abbot, and his body to the church for burial. For three centuries Poblet was the royal pantheon.

After the marriage of Aragon to Castile, its greatness declined. Not its treasure. That was so abundant that in 1772 a new sacristy had to be built to accommodate it. The peasants, growing poorer, shook their fists at the golden door. In the Carlist uprising, the crash came. A mob of *somatenes* stormed the wall.

They looted the church and the royal tombs; they scattered the dust of the Conquistador in the courtyard. They fired the library, and carried off the plate, and jewels, and embroidered vestments. The monks, what there were of them, for the order had declined in numbers as in power, fled, no one knows where. Poblet, once the grandest monastery in Spain and the wealthiest in all Christendom, was laid waste forever.

But the axes and torches were not able to conquer the strong stone of its Cistercian foundation. The great stone-vaulted chambers are as defiant of Time as when their stones were laid in the closing years of the twelfth century. The noble cloister remains intact. The waters splashed over the stone coping of the double-tiered fountain in the hexagonal lavatory which was a feature of all cloisters of St. Bernard's rule. We looked up at the delicate ajimez windows of Don Martin's palace, and pitied *el Humano* that he did not live to look down through their arches at this green place of contemplation.

How busy that cloister must have been when the monks of Poblet numbered hundreds! From the size of the novices' dormitory — twenty bays, one hundred and seventy-two feet long — one might believe they had been thousands. What delicious savours must have been wafted from the kitchen along the north side where three cooking places were provided to supply the tables in the refectory! The *fraile cocinero* had a little window, too, through which he could peep into the refectory and see with what gusto his dishes were received.

The wide-throated stone chimneys are blackened with the smoke and soot of many a roasted ox and pig,

THROUGH THE GOLDEN GATE — POBLET

thousands of fat capons, and thousands of partridges. Two apiece for supper, the noble brothers considered no more than their due. Once, when the cook was lazy or the huntsman failed, and they were served a single quail each, they objected vigorously, and refused to sing the usual offices of the day in the choir.

There is no sound of singing in the *coro* now. Only the outer shell of the church remains. The windows are empty of glass so the swallows fly in and out, and build themselves nests among the headless statues of the retable. There is a certain amount of historic justice in the fact that so much of that retable "in the pagan manner" of the Italian Renaissance remains. The brothers were so scandalized by the little loves and fauns and satyrs that appear in the proper company of the apostles and martyrs that they sentenced the Lord Abbot, who erected it, to solitary life confinement.

That particular abbot sleeps with his predecessors and successors in a long row under the stones of the chapter house, their faces toward the open windows to the east. Distinctions of rank seem not to have been levelled by Brother Death. The monks of noble birth are buried behind the high altar, the lay brothers in the south aisle. Kings and queens and royal dons were coffined along the walls of the choir. Philip, Duke of Wharton, who died here in 1731 was given a tomb in the nave. He came to Poblet poor and disgraced, having followed the waning fortunes of the Pretender. "The scorn and wonder of our days," Pope said of him.

But the history of Poblet is written. It was, and great was the strength of it; and it is no more. From 1162 to 1823 is a long story.

Unlike Montserrat and Guadalupe, it had no miracle

working image to draw pilgrims to its shrine. If it had, it might have endured, as these have endured, by their tie with the life of the people. Poblet was rather a great feudal barony with the saints for a standing army, and power not only over life and death, but over the life to come. It, and other religious houses like it, kept alive the power and the grandeur that was Rome. While these houses endured, the Holy Roman Empire yet lived on.

Coming out of the gloom of the passage, Ximena standing there in the courtyard, seemed an impertinent intruder. A low humming over our heads made us look up. Over the ruined roofs of the monastery came an aëroplane. It clove the sky like a silver bird, headed south over the soft Francoli hills on a new trade route unknown to Rome.

We saluted her as she passed.

"The King is dead," said the Good Sport softly. "Long live the King!"

CHAPTER SIX

ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF ARAGON

IT WAS from the third, the southern, gate of "Spanish Tarragona" that we took the road on the morning after our visit to Poblet. The proprietor of the friendly Hotel de Paris, four waiters, two porters and our chambermaid came out to the sidewalk to inspect Ximena and to superintend the stowing away of the luggage.

As was quite in the order of things Spanish, a little crowd began to collect — soldiers from the barracks next door, two or three women on their way to market, the friendly policeman from the corner, and a score of small boys. At this point arrived the chambermaid bearing a wilted bouquet of wild lavender which we had gathered along the roadside the day before. She gave one look at the arrangement of luggage, disapproved violently in a flood of wordy gesticulation, and before we could interfere, had everything out on the sidewalk while she proceeded to rearrange us and the bags to her own satisfaction.

This accomplished, she pressed the wilted bouquet into the Good Sport's hands, patted me on both cheeks, beamed upon us impartially, and stepped back on the curb with a gesture of benign dismissal.

We made our exit as inconspicuously as possible through a back street between garden walls over which

the blossoming arms of almond and peach trees waved us a farewell; past the fish market, then in its colorful early morning hour, over the bridge across the Francoli running down from Poblet to the sea, and so on the highroad for Valencia.

The distance from Tarragona to the Moorish City of Delight is two hundred and sixty kilometers — one hundred and sixty-two miles. Too much for one day's run as we liked to make it, pausing to enjoy views, to read the inscriptions on tablets and wayside crosses, to peek into a market, or turn down any bypath that held the promise of adventure. Not for any record ever devised would we give up this method of travel. The friends who asked us at the start of our tour, "How many miles do you expect to make each day?" did not know our habits. How many miles a day? It depended on from where to where, and whether the day was marked for special adventure.

We planned to "make night" at Benicarló where, according to report, there was a good *fonda* with clean beds, plain but eatable food, and a smiling hostess. Could any inn boast a better bush? It was lonely country south of Tarragona. The road that morning was strangely empty of carts. We missed the cheerful tinkle of bells and harness. Between us and the sea lay vineyards of the justly famous grapes of Tarragona, interspersed with orchards of almond and walnut trees. A road wound through them down to Salou, the port for Reus lying up in the hills. A square white watch tower crowned the promontory. From Salou and Cambrils, King Jaime's fleet set sail against Majorca. One hundred forty-three ships carrying fifteen hundred foot soldiers and fifteen hundred horse. Most of the

vessels were fishing craft commandeered from the villages of Cataluña, but the city of Narbonne sent a sizable vessel with three decks. The population of Tarragona elbowed each other for places on the watch tower to see them stand away. The aged archbishop, who was too old to be included among the fighting bishops of the crusade, came down to the shore in the glory of his crimson robes to bless the expedition. But there was no doubt of the ultimate victory; flaming spirits like the Conquistador's do not inherit defeat.

Beyond Cambrils, the four ruined towers of an ancient hospice rose close beside the road. It was one of many built by the Knights Templar for the comfort of pilgrims taking the road to the Holy Sepulchre. "THE ROAD," as they called it in those days led through Valencia and the province of the Moor with crusading a plenty to be done in transit. Its walls, crumbling now under the dust of the passing of other ideas, sprouted wild grasses and patches of pink rock cress. But the gate stood wide. Within the courtyard, a woman washed brown cooking pots in the knights' fountain.

We had left the cultivated lands behind. Now the mountains marched down to the sea. Their slopes were no longer green with olive and the useful carob trees, but barren of vegetation except tufts of sage and palmetto and wide spreadings of rosemary in grey blue flower. Its incense drawn out by the salt wind, was in our nostrils. The sky was overcast and a chill wind blew in sudden spurts and silences from the Mediterranean which was no longer blue, but grey.

As the road fought its way through the stubborn hills with many twists and turns and swift ascents, we began to understand the nice distinction of adjectives

in the Guia Michelin. Its author apparently knew but four — *ondulada*, *sinuosa*, *peligrosa* and *accidentada*. *Ondulada*, we were learning from experience, meant a series of abrupt up and down grades. *Sinuosa*, a series of winding curves. *Peligrosa* was anything of startling nature from a precipice on either side and a road scarcely wider than a mule track between, to abrupt down grades and right angle curves. *Accidentada* —

What was a road when it was *accidentada?* "*Muy accidentada*," the guide characterized the stretch between Hospitalet and Perelló. I hid the yellow volume under the seat where the Good Sport could not see it, and kept my wonderings to myself!

Gradually, in the course of the next four or five kilometers it dawned upon me that when a road was *ondulada*, *sinuosa* and *peligrosa* in all its interpretations — and these at one and the same time — then it became in the opinion of the writer of the Guide "*muy accidentada*."

This road was all of that.

Perhaps, too, the loneliness of the surrounding country began to get on our nerves. The wailing of the wind across the moors, the overhanging ledges of the mountains on which not even a herd of solemn goats found pasturage, the empty road and the dunes and beyond these the oily grey sea.

Suddenly, it seemed to me that we were two lone women a very long way from home.

The road, which had been following a deep crevass in the mountains, came out unexpectedly on a height above the sea. From the summit the cliff fell away sheer and straight two hundred feet to the Mediterranean, as though some giant hand had sliced it neatly

with a knife. Down that rock wall the *carretera* descended in a series of ten sharp turnings upon itself. And while its inside edge was cut into the face of the cliff, the outer edge was built out into space and was without wall or barrier of any kind. A slipping of the brakes, an increase of speed above the car's ability to make the turns, and there would be only a rosemary bush between us and the depths of Mare Nostrum.

That particular *bajada rapida* was our initiation. After it, anything seemed easy. We gauged other grades by that of Perelló, and felt ourselves to be veterans of the Spanish road.

Eighty-four kilometers south of Tarragona, the River Ebro empties into the sea. The Ebro is the great water course of Navarre, Old Castile and Aragon. In its winding way from its source in the Cantabrian Mountains, it has gathered tons of silt which it deposits in a vast sandy delta pushed out into the Mediterranean beyond the town of Amposta. There are villages on those sand banks and small lakes and rice fields and canals through which the fishing boats are drawn with their silver freight up to the market in the town.

A long bridge led us across the river into the town. A tall brown tower with a clock rose beside the market place — the first town clock we had seen in this land where the sun dial serves most communities as a time piece. It was close on thirteen o'clock.

In the excitement of departure, we had neglected to ask the hotel in Tarragona to give us a picnic lunch, and the salt wind had sharpened our appetites. We drew up beside the *despacho* where a crowd of peasants waited for the diligence to Tortosa. We looked for a

restaurant or a café that might produce at least a *tortilla.*

As we did so, a man detached himself from the crowd and hopped on the running board. "Did we want a *conda?*" Not a *fonda* we said. Was there a restaurant?

Crouching on the step, he directed us through a bewildering maze of side streets. Children scampered before us. An old man sitting an ass between two wide canvas panniers filled with fresh cut barley, belabored the beast about the haunches and rode her full tilt into an open house door. A group of women about a fountain lifted the brimming red clay water jars to their heads and flattened themselves in a row against the wall, like caryatides, that we might pass.

Our guide motioned us to stop before a white house that had an outside staircase along one wall. Pots of purple stock and scarlet geraniums and marguerites stood on the steps. Against the wall hung a small cage with a pair of pigeons. Above was a clean upper room in which two tables were set beside a window. The guide, turned maître d'hôtel by the simple act of exchanging his coat for a capacious apron — he retained his black beret — brought an enormous tureen of bouillabaisse Catalan. Its inescapable fishiness and oiliness was thickened with sops of stale *pan de familia.*

Fortunately, there was also an omelet. There usually is. The traveller in Spain has reason to bless the fecundity of Spanish hens. Gautier complained that Spanish omelets tasted of feathers, but Gautier had the Gallic scorn for a transmontine cuisine.

While we disposed of the omelet, our host leaned far out of the window and hissed sibilantly through his teeth. This, it would seem, is the approved method of

A STREET IN BENICARLÓ

MEN OF AMPOSTA IN THE COSTUME OF ARAGON

calling anyone. A baker's boy going by, balancing on his head a wide wooden tray filled with meringues, came running swiftly up the stairs. We finished our lunch in a style that would have pleased Gautier better than the beginning.

The men of Amposta wear the ancient costume of Aragon — black velvet knee breeches above grey or light blue woolen stockings. A vivid sash bound tightly about the waist does duty for a waistcoat under the short, loose jacket of black velvet. A high crowned, soft, black felt hat completes the ensemble.

Groups of them were taking their ease in the Plaza with the absorption in the pursuit that becomes an art south of the Pyrenees. One, taller and handsomer than the rest, we coveted for our camera. I approached him, kodak in hand. It is seldom that a Spaniard will decline the flattering invitation to be photographed — indeed, there is usually difficulty in limiting the number of all too willing subjects to the size of the film — but this man was different.

He shook his head with no uncertain meaning. He held up his hand in protest — but, HE DID NOT MOVE AWAY. With the other hand he beckoned — to one man in this group, to another across the square — to another, and another, and another. They came and ranged themselves about him, he ordaining where and how each one should pose, the while motioning to me, as a director to his camera man, not to "shoot." When the group merited his approval, he took his own attitude in the midst, and nodded me gracious permission.

I "shot"; the fringe of children and women — drab creatures in wool and calico, entirely eclipsed by the velvet magnificence of their men — broke into a cheer.

With much waving of hands and cries of "*adios*," we drove away.

The Michelin Guide, consulted during lunch, showed that Tortosa was only fifteen kilometers upstream from Amposta's bridge. We turned off the main route and followed the left bank of the Ebro into steadily rising country. The mountains of Aragon with their quarries of pink and brown and purple marble form a background for a brown town lying close along the river's edge. The water-stained houses were weighted with balconies on which pots of purple stock, marigolds and the inevitable washing made splashes of pure color. Many were built on archways through which the river flowed dark and swift. Little boats were moored to the foundation stones.

In the tenth century Tortosa was the capital of an independent Moorish kingdom. It was also a hot bed of pirates. Their swift *feluccas* with crimson sails sped down the waterway through the Puerto de los Alfaques and to sea mischief. The Pope preached a special crusade against them, the Knights Templar took it up, and Count Ramon Berenguer led Catalans, Genoese and Pisans to the attack.

Later, the ousted Moors returned and besieged the city. From that vengeance Tortosa, like Orihuela, was saved only by the heroism of its women. They mounted walls with their kettles of boiling oil and poured the contents down on the heads of the attackers. They stood in the gate and rallied their men to more vigorous defence. For this, Count Ramon rewarded them with the red sash of the Order of La Hacha (the Axe), a decoration sufficiently bellicose, it would seem, to satisfy the most militant Amazon. Perhaps it was too

militant, for he added to it two privileges more qualified to please feminine desires — the right to import their dress goods free of duty, and to precede the men at the marriage ceremony.

We had hoped to see a Tortosa wedding, but were disappointed. The town dozed heavily through the *siesta* hour. Its streets wore a blank air. Its house fronts were noncommittal. At a café table a man sat before his glass of coffee, sound asleep and bolt upright. The *limpia botas* slumbered on the door sill among his blacking brushes.

St. Paul is reputed to have been a resident of Tortosa and to have built himself a house on the hill near the present cathedral. After him, the city's most famous personage was Nicholas Breakspear, later Adrian IV, the only Englishman to become pope. He was Bishop of Tortosa on his way to Rome.

La Seo towers above the town. Its silhouette reminds one of Gerona. The great church itself is good Gothic in the strong, simple pointed style of the cathedral of Barcelona. But its fine effect has been sadly marred by the pompous baroque façade which was added sometime in Spain's period of self-conscious magnificence.

A grumpy sacristan took us around the chapels. Not for a moment were we allowed to forget that our importunity had interfered with the *siesta.* Did we show sign of lingering to study the curiously carved choir stalls or the heavy leather bound folios of manuscript music on the desks, he jingled his keys rebukingly.

He saved for a climax Tortosa's chief jewel — the girdle of the Virgin Mary. It had wrought many miracles, he assured us with late-awakened enthusiasm. Pilgrims came from all parts of Spain to touch it. A

little over a century ago it had been carried in state in a royal coach to Aranjuez, to aid the *accouchement* of a princess.

Coming out we encountered five or six young mothers bringing their babies to be baptized. The women wore the prescribed black, and their heads were veiled with *mantillas* of net or lace. The babies were masses of starched white ruffles and embroidery. Each mother and godmother carried as well a tall christening candle marvellously twisted and fluted and painted with silver, like a staff of lilies. From a side chapel hurried a priest accompanied by a small acolyte who carried a candle in a silver stick. The boy's crimson silk vestment was carefully tucked up in front displaying dusty *alpagartas*. He set the candle on the edge of the font while the priest turned the pages of his book and the women drew close, murmuring softly together. In the dusty gloom of the tall church, their candles were like the faint Pleiades.

We paused at the bridge head. Upstream lay Zaragoza, the ancient capital of the Kings of Aragon and the home of the illustrious Maid.

"Who can defend like her a lover's ghost?"

Of course, her romantic story appealed to Byron — he might have written it himself out of his own imagination if History had not forestalled him — but no less did the doughty independence of the Aragonese and their resistance to the French forces fire his liberty loving spirit.

After the red and brown and ochre of Tortosa and Amposta, San Carlos de la Rapita, lying close by the sea road, came as a sharp, white surprise. White, low

walls supporting flat roofs — *azoteas* — white sailcloth curtains flapping in the open doorways where the women sat torpidly on their squat black chairs, and the babies and chickens and lean dogs played contentedly in the warm dust. The hand of the Moor was over all. We had run away from the mist and the threat of storm when we left the mountains the other side of the Ebro, here the sun shone blindingly on the white walls. The lanes between the houses were grateful wells of blue shadow. Nowhere was there a spear of green. The men, lounging before the village café wore black kerchiefs bound tightly about their dark brows, two ends brought forward and twisted in a knot as old as Islam, the third hanging down behind to shield the back of the neck from the sun. The faces under those head kerchiefs were the color of old Spanish leather, seamed and weathered by the wind and the sun and the vagaries of the sea. They were like the pirates of Penzance, their hands thrust swaggeringly into the tops of their *fajas* — wine red, and magenta and peacock blue.

Over the house roofs on the sea side rose the tangled masts and spars of the fishing fleet moored under the wall. All that one had ever heard or thought or read of:

> "Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
> And the beauty and majesty of the ships,
> And the magic of the sea . . ."

was in that one short street, before the sign TRAVESIA with its decisive arrow pointed us out and on to Vinaroz.

Vinaroz, what a harvest is compact in those three

syllables! Vin — aroz, wine and rice. Not the pallid cereal grains that we know, but the succulent *paella* of Valencia, heavy with oil, and golden with saffron, and crimson with strips of pepper and whole shrimps and tiny crabs, and salt with all manner of weird sea creatures in fluted shells; served smoking hot, and eaten with the strong, hard, white bread that Spanish bakers know so well how to make. And this washed down with the rich dark wine of the region that is almost as black as ink. It was from over-indulgence in this dish, here at Vinaroz, that the Duke of Vendome, grandson of the Grand Monarch, died. Philip V, who owed him his throne, had the body interred among the princes of Spain in the Escorial, whether in gratitude or warning, is left to the visitor's imagination. We paused to look up at the dusty-fronted palace where the Duke had dined so well and so disastrously.

The wines of Vinaroz and Benicarló are shipped to Cette, thence through the canal of Languedoc to Bordeaux, where they are used as a base for the famous Bordeaux brands.

The streets of Vinaroz were strewn with olive branches. Our tires crushed them as we passed. The Bishop of Tortosa had gone by in triumphal procession that morning. "You have come just too late," the man at the gasoline station told us regretfully.

Vinaroz was our entrance to the province of Valencia, the province second only to Granada in the heart of the Moor. Twice they took it, and twice they lost it; once to the Cid, and the second and last time to Jaime the Conquistador. Behind us lay the essential hardness that is Cataluña. Before us stretched the languorous, fecund land of Valence.

We ended our day's journey at Benicarló, another white town with streets leading down to the sea, past open doors in which hung curtains of knotted cord, like fish nets, and ornamented with heavy, crocheted lace. Though the meshes were as wide as those of the seines drying on the rocks by the shore, the dark rooms behind them were completely concealed from the eyes of the passers-by, while those within could look out on all that happened in the street, unseen. There were furtive movements and rustlings and lowered voices behind those deceptive hangings when we walked about the village in the late afternoon sun. The word was cried up and down the lanes that two foreign women . . . alone. . . in a *coche Ford*, had arrived at Fonda La Rosa and intended to spend the night.

"Why?" "Where were they going?" "And why were they going there?" "What were they doing in Spain?" "Were they married?" "And where were their husbands?" "And if all these things were true, *verdad!* what were they doing in Benicarló?"

The rustle and the whispering were not confined behind the house curtains. Spanish curiosity broke through these and swept up the streets and filled the room where we were waiting for the eight o'clock dinner hour. We held a sort of reception, sitting in the rush bottom chairs that stood in opposing rows around the walls of the fonda's entrance room, while other curious ones if less venturesome, crowded the doorway.

This intense interest in a stranger and in the stranger's intimate concerns, which the untried traveller finds disturbing, is not impertinence but good manners. Boredom has never become fashionable south of the Pyrenees. It is good manners to ask questions, and the

same code requires that the stranger should ask questions in return.

"Where were we going?"

Could I give them the truth — that we were knight errants of the road, seeking romance in market places and patios, at crossroads and in encounters such as this, hoping if our luck held, to find a misplaced sense of humor at the journey's end, like the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow? Romance they would understand, but romance in this guise? They had not understood the Don's quest; they had seen only buffoonery in his tilting with the windmills of La Mancha. Was not this journey of our's of parallel purpose?

The question came again: "Where were we going?"

Then inspiration came.

"To Seville, for the *semana santa*."

"*Aie*!" A sigh of curiosity appeased ran around the wall. Sevilla and *la semana santa*. There was something one could understand, which took no extraordinary act of faith to encompass. We were pious pilgrims from France — what? Not from France? *Madre mia!* From *Nueva York* in the *Norte América*, the saints alone knew how many thousands of kilometers over the sea! On our way to keep Holy Week in Seville. What, there was nothing extraordinary about that! Did not pilgrims come from all the cities of Spain to see the *Macharena* and the *Jesus del Gran Poder* borne through the lane of kneeling penitents in the Sierpes? We were doing wisely, but only what was to be expected . . .

The group dispersed. We sat on, alone, while the dusk came up out of the sea, and filled the town. The old lamplighter with his ladder on his back stumped

down the street and paused to look in at us. The goats were driven by and milked at the doors. Their feet tinkled on the cobblestones — quite a different sound from the faithful trot-trot of the donkey hooves that is the music of the Spanish road. When they had passed, a woman emerged from the house across the way. She brushed up the droppings into a basket and carried them carefully away.

We were up early and astir. The garage keeper who had gone into Castellon to the bullfight on the day before, gave us warning of the road ahead. For so many kilometers "*buena carretera.*" Then — somewhere, there was a river to cross. There had been rains . . . the river was high. We would have to ford it.

"There are men with mules," he cautioned us, "waiting to pull out the cars that sink in the sand. For which they ask many *duros*. They will tell you to keep to the left. But you must not believe them. Oh, no, *señorita*, do not believe them, for they are liars. The road over the ford does not lie to the left, it lies to the right, so —" his arm described a generous gesture. "To the right, señorita, . . . always to the right . . . and you will cross over safely on the stones."

"To the right," I repeated. "I shall not forget."

He threw wide the door and waved to us cheerily: "*Buen viaje.*"

He, too, expected to take the same route in about a month's time when he was engaged to drive a party of pilgrims to Seville for Holy Week. His pretty rosy-cheeked wife stood beside him in the doorway. "Was she going too?" we asked. She shook her head. Someone must stay at home. Later, in the summer, she was

going to visit her mother at San Sebastian. She smiled in happy anticipation. The king would be there.

It was still so early that the mist had not rolled away from the sea's edge. It curled and foamed about the rocky shore cloaking the morning business of the boats. It made the promontory of Petriscola south of the town appear a magic island rising out of the mist and the sea as though some recent Prospero had called it from the depths. The Gibraltar of Valencia, as local pride would have it. A ruined white castle crowned the rocks. There Hannibal rested, and there he took his vow of vengeance upon Rome. The same strong stone walls and towers gave asylum to the anti-pope, Benedict XIII of the Great Schism, after the Council of Constance dethroned him. He was of the powerful Zaragoza family of the Counts of Luna, but he preferred this lonely sea castle to the stately palaces in the Aragonese capital. With his "cardinals" and "chamberlains," most of whom were drafted for service from the fishermen of the village, he maintained a travesty of his former state. Pope of Benicarló if not of Rome.

Our way to Castellon de la Plana lay away from the sea's edge, through the valley between the two ridges of the coast range. Between us and the Mediterranean rose a mountain wall, green with groves of olives and carob trees. There were castles on the heights. Two towers look away to sea, and two guard the valley. Little, brown villages squat in the hollows of the mountain side. The high road runs tendrils of winding lane up to each one. Men were ploughing between the olives in the fields beside the road, and big black and white magpies hopped expectantly along the brown, smoking furrows.

We counted the kilometer stones against the garage keeper's score — so many of *buena carretera* and then — around a bend in the road we came on the river. It was an *arroyo* swelled to sizable dimensions by the late winter rains. As had been foretold us, on the opposite shore, waited six or seven men, with as many mules. Their eyes lighted upon us with greedy expectation. "*Una mujer*," we heard them cry. Two came down the bank, beckoning us on.

We came. At the first swirl of the water about her wheels, Ximena shivered. The current was stronger than my inexperienced eye had judged. The gesticulations on the opposite shore became more vigorous, the voices became insistent: "To the left, *señorita*."

The roiled waters concealed what might lie beneath them. One had to take the bottom on trust, and on the word of the garage keeper of Benicarló. I put Ximena into low, and with the water up to the hubs of her front wheels, swung her sharply to the right. Up mounted the waters, up to the step and above it. The Good Sport clutched the baggage, and drew up her feet. The tires tore at the stones and gravel of the river bed. Down went one wheel, slipping over the edge of a rock and up went the other in a spasmodic jerk that threatened to tear the chassis apart. Down . . . up . . . down . . . for an agonizing second Ximena stood still, straddling a boulder. The men ran, cheering along the bank . . . then she thought better of it, wrenched herself free and crawled up the shore to safety.

The muleteers were eloquently silent as we passed them. Ximena was still panting. The mud and gravel dripped from her like the fringes of a shawl, but in her

heart, I know she was triumphant. The Good Sport leaned over and patted her side.

Ahead of us, against the yellow brown sierra, shone the blue dome and blue-capped tower of Alcalá de Chisvert's heavy church. It has a tall openwork stone tower visible for miles across the flat lands toward the sea. The church brooded over a busy market scene. Oranges in great golden heaps alternated with piles of cabbage, artichokes and bundles of barley for the goats. A small boy with no covering above the waist save two long garlands of garlic like Hawaiian *leis* strolled about through the crowd offering the cloves for sale. He sprang on the step of the car and thrust the redolent bulbs under our noses — "Six for a fat dog."

(The big copper pieces of ten *centimos* are colloquially "*perros gordos*" (fat dogs) an impertinent reference to the royal lion on their reverse. Five *centimos* coppers are "*perras chicas*" — little dogs.)

We had luncheon to buy. Long ago we had decided that while we relished one Spanish meal a day, two were one too many. A luncheon of *hors d'œuvres*, eggs, fish, two kinds of meat, vegetables drenched with oil, *pastas* and fruit would make a two hour *siesta* obligatory. To lose two hours and more of the vigorous Spanish sunlight that we had travelled so far to find was to cast aside the gift of the gods. We preferred the happy alternative of a picnic lunch by the roadside.

Up and down the lane of canvas-shaded market stalls we collected our purchases in a basket — half a *kilo* of hard *pan de familia*, radishes, goats' milk cheese, white and firm and slightly sour; oranges; a dozen dried figs strung on a bit of *esparto* grass. At a corner stall a woman presided over two huge crocks of Valen-

cian pottery, their open tops were unscreened but the *chico* stood by with a whisk of broom to keep away the flies. The crocks were filled with a delectable compote of fruits of the *huerta* — orange and lemon and citron and ripe figs and apricots and *nísperos* and peaches whose "long meandering Spanish name" — *melocotón* — is linked "sweetness long drawn out." All ripened to bursting sweetness under the sun of Valencia and melded with honey from the hives of Alcalá. She ladled it into little yellow and green jars of the same sunshiny pottery — a summer to a jar.

We drove out through a deep archway in a sun-baked red brown tower, part of the town's ancient Moorish fortifications. There was a placard on the wall:

IN THIS SETTLEMENT
BLASPHEMY AND BEGGING
ARE PROHIBITED.

Directly beneath it sat a cripple. He bared a withered arm to our gaze as we passed, and his whole arm held up a pewter begging bowl.

The road yielded no further adventure. It ran straight and uneventful past white-walled Benicasim, as Moorish in appearance as its name. Here was a bit of Africa transplanted across the straits. The square, flat-roofed white houses gleamed in the sun, tall palms rose beside them, and in the fields were water wheels fitted with clay jars. In one garden a blindfolded donkey walked patiently between the shafts turning the wheel. On the edge of the well sat a woman with a heavy black shawl over her head. She caught one corner of it across her chin and stared at us over the edge — a gesture of Islam that has outlasted its creed.

Busy-streeted Castellon held no lure to make us stop. The painter Ribalta was born there. He had always seemed to us one of the least inspired of Spain's artists. Perhaps it was the fault of Castellon. His birthplace was an uninspiring town. King Jaime founded it as a military base during his attack on the Moors of Valencia, but the spirit of the Conquistador has long since given way to an unromantic industrialism.

Beyond it, the road runs white and smooth and hard across a wide plain through which one has glimpses of the winding Castellon Canal built by Moorish engineers six centuries ago. It still carries the waters of the mountain stream to the orange and lemon groves they planted between the coast range and the sea. The Moors brought the orange into Spain. When the dark tide swept up into Valencia they turned it into a garden. While walled palaces dotted the *huerta*, in the courts, date palms rose beside the fountains of blue *azulejos*; groves of orange and lemon and pomegranate grew close about the walls.

When Philip III declared that he had "rather reign over a depopulated country than rule a nation of infidels," more than two hundred thousand Moriscos were crowded on the galleys that bore them away from Valencia to Africa. It was an exodus second only to that from Granada.

Tradition says that they left much of their treasure behind. The nobles of Castile and Aragon who took over the lands spent much time and more labor than those proudly indolent gentry would have given to a less romantic quest, in excavating the vaults of towers and mosques, digging under town walls, always with the vision of heaps of ruby and pearl just beyond their spades.

We were following the route of King Jaime's advance.

When he rode down out of Aragon, the church rode at his side. It built wayside crosses along the high-road to mark the progress of the Holy Cause against the infidel. One, still standing not far south of Castellon, bore traces of its ancient coloring. The steps and stone shaft were mustard lichened, but pious hands had kept clear the figure of the Saviour, and on the opposite side of the cross that of His Mother sorrowing over the dead body of her Son.

We passed several of these along this part of the road. One, at a crossroads beyond Chilches where King Jaime's great battle was fought and won, had a sort of plaster oven built around its base. The fire opening was blackened and sooted, to tell how many wayfarers had rested and warmed themselves there.

There was one resting there now, an old man with a black handkerchief knotted about his head. He wore the countryman's grey smock, over dusty corduroy trousers. He had put his baggage, which consisted of an accordion and a black goatskin *bota* filled with oil, on the flat top of the oven under the cross. Catching our eye, he came out into the road and motioned us to stop.

Had we seen the diligence?

We told him "no."

Que lastima! He did not know at what time it passed. Already he had been sitting there drinking the winds for how many hours! Perhaps, it had already gone. Perhaps, it did not go at all today. *Quien sabe.* To whom did *el coche Ford* belong?

To us? *Maravilloso!* Never before had he seen a woman drive an automobile! Donkeys, yes. A woman

and a donkey, they had much in common! He chuckled at the excellence of his own wit. But not automobiles.

Were we for Valencia? He was going there, on a visit to his son for a matter of a christening. And to make his welcome sure, he was taking with him some oil . . . He indicated the black skin *bota*.

But he was taking music, too, we suggested.

"*Sí, Sí, Sí, Sí, la música.*" His face beamed. He lifted the accordion from the stones, drew it out and compressed it in a long breathy sigh. Then he threw back his head and began to sing. His voice was surprisingly strong. It came through the nose in the approved *honda*, with the long intervals that distinguish the Moorish music of the south:

"Si esta noche no sales
a la ventana
Cuentame entre los muertos
desde mañana."

"He who sings, drives away his sorrows," he opined wisely when the song was done.

A rattle and a toot behind us gave warning of the approaching diligence. It rocked and swayed along the road toward us. Its roof was high-piled with baskets, crates of oranges, fowls, and a red-covered mattress rolled and tied into a giant *chorizo*. From its windows, heads craned. It drew up beside the cross.

Our friend tossed his goatskin up beside the mattress, and climbed aboard clutching the accordion to his breast. After the cordial fashion of Spain, the others made room for him somehow. He nodded to us happily through the window. With a warning honk, the diligence started again on its crazy way. Out of the cloud

of dust that marked its passing, floated back to us the wheezy note of the accordion with a chorus of many voices.

"Cuentame entre los muertos
Desde Mañana."

"If tonight thou comest not
To the window,
Count me among the dead,
Tomorrow."

CHAPTER SEVEN

OLD WALLS OF SAGUNTUM

THE traveller's tale in which the Good Sport chiefly delights is that of Boswell, asking the great Doctor if the Giants' Causeway were worth seeing. "Worth seeing, yes," said Johnson. "But not worth going to see."

We quoted it to each other having halted Ximena on the road just south of the bridge across the Palancia for a long upward glance at the walls and crumbling towers of ancient Saguntum crowning the hill. The mountain rose abruptly from the green and gold *huerta*. Around the base and up the sides straggled the uninteresting modern town. Above the roofs and church towers appeared bare brown hillsides topped by the fortified city that gave Hannibal to pause. The hill was steep; the path narrow and stony; the noonday sun unexpectedly hot. Was Saguntum worth going to see?

Decidedly, it was.

We found a parking place for Ximena in the courtyard of the Posada de los Coronas.

A *posada* is the next step downward in the traveller's scale from a *fonda*. Below it is a *parador*, where one may be expected to bring one's own food and cook it over a tiny fire in the courtyard. Below the *parador*, there is only a hollow under a hedge with the stars for a

roof. If you are a conventional traveller with an insistence on clean beds, food without garlic, and "Service," then a *posada* is a place to be shuddered at. If you are a romantic with no prejudices in your knapsack, and a lively interest in humankind of whatever degree, then it is the Spanish inn of romance.

"Do you remember an Inn, Miranda?
Do you remember an Inn?
And the tedding and the spreading
Of the straw for a bedding?
And the fleas that tease in the High Pyrenees?
And the wine that tasted of the tar?
And the cheers and the jeers of the young muleteers
Under the vine of the dark veranda?
Do you remember an Inn, Miranda?
Do you remember an Inn?"

That Inn was a *posada.* I am as sure of it as if the verses were my own.

The *posada* is Spain today as when Lope de Vega found a grateful lodging with the muleteers and left their fire for his candle-lit alcove to write them into his comedies. Don Quixote was born in surroundings such as these.

The heart of the *posada* is its courtyard. Around this runs a gallery from which the sleeping rooms open. Rugs, sheep skins, blankets and tattered *alforjas* are flung over the gallery railing. One room on the ground floor, opening from the courtyard, is kitchen and dining room. All the rest is stable. At one corner of the courtyard in the shade of the gallery stands the water butt. Each guest on entering seeks this out first.

The Posada de los Coronas was *típico.* A *tartana*, the two-wheeled cart of Valencia, varnished yellow with a

spreading canvas hood, tilted its shafts upward in one corner. Under a lowlier farm-cart a lean hound alternately scratched and dozed. Four or five fowls roosted in the cart. A small grey donkey, close shaved over the back and withers, very fuzzy as to legs, stood patiently in one corner. It carried wide panniers of canvas bound with tooled leather, and over these bright-colored *alforjas* — saddlebags. The panniers and saddlebag pockets were stuffed as for a journey. Protruding from one pocket was a familiar red-bound book — Bædecker.

We found the path behind the village that led up the hill to the ancient city. Patches of cactus sprouted from the hillside. The path's edge was outlined in new green grass and tiny yellow daisies. Seven invading hosts had climbed the steep before us — Carthage, Rome, the Goths, Islam, the Cid, Don Jaime and last of all Napoleon's army under Marshal Suchet. The French occupied Saguntum to its final destruction. Going, they left all that Time had left of the once magnificent amphitheatre — a heap of tumbled stones. Napoleon created Marshal Suchet Duke of Albufera in return for his services in capturing Valencia.

Livy describes the first historic seige of Saguntum in 218 B.C. Hannibal battering at the walls. Three times the Carthaginians forced a breach through the walls; three times the Iberians built new walls within the old. Traces of these remain today. At last Hannibal sent an emissary with this proposition — Let the Saguntines surrender their city and each man, woman and child would be spared; they should depart unarmed, each with two garments. For answer, the citizens built a great pyre in the market place. Into it they threw all the wealth of the city, threw themselves, too. When

Hannibal entered, he found the place a smoking shambles.

With the downfall of the empire of the Cæsars, the life of Saguntum ebbed. Even its ancient honorable name was lost. Murviedro, Old Walls, the country folk called it. They rolled its stones down the hillside to build the village at the base of the cliff.

It had a flaming moment of importance when the Almoravides fortified it as a northern outpost of their kingdom of Valencia. They added the square-topped tower and gate on the steep northwest side. The Cid drove them from the fortress when he came by in 1094. One hundred and fifty years later the Conquistador put an end to Moorish rule there forever.

A stout gate with a drawbridge leads into the ancient city. Through a second inner gate of Moorish building, we climbed over the steep uneven ground between of crumbled masonry. Dug deep into the hill, were cisterns, some of Roman workmanship. Within these red brown walls had been a thriving city twenty-one centuries ago. It was the richest city beyond the Ebro, according to Livy. Its potteries were famous.

From the eastern battlements, we looked across the *huerta* to the dim blue line that was the Mediterranean. The sea came closer in the days before the Moors developed the Albufera. Below us, the hill fell away precipitously to the hideous modern monument that marks the site of Marshal Campos' Pronunciamiento of December 12th, 1874, which restored the Bourbon dynasty in the person of Alfonso XII. On the south, the hillside was a thicket of cactus and prickly pear, to the east and north, straggled modern Sagunto.

Along the winding Palancia where the Romans had

their circus, the women knelt in sociable groups of three and four, their blue petticoats well drawn back, as they beat and slapped the linen against the stones. One group had pressed a burro into service to carry the wet garments up the bank to a thicket of wild briars where they were spread to dry under the guardianship of two small girls.

Beyond the curve of the river, the *huerta* was velvet green with the new barley. The dust and chaff of last year's threshing still covered the circular stone-paved threshing floors at the edge of the town. What would we not give to come this way at harvest time? The sheaves are spread out on the stones and the grain trampled out by the feet of oxen driven to the chant of songs that came into Valencia with the Moors.

Darker patches on the *huerta* were groves of oranges and lemons, figs and *nísperos* (medlars), the fruit so dear to Spanish children that they cannot name them without a smile.

The amphitheatre of Saguntum was built by the Romans on the north slope of the hill, outside the walls. The steps are cut out of the natural rock. The guardian came from his cottage across the path and unlocked the gate for us, then went back to his *cocido*. He and his family were lunching happily on the door step, with the lunch stewing in an earthenware pot over a tiny charcoal fire.

Other visitors were there before us. A herd of goats grazed among the stones. Their small shepherd lay stretched out flat on his back in the sun. The goats were peaceful successors to the wild beasts which once fought in the arena to the delight of eight thousand spectators. Doubtless there were bull fights here,

too. A fine statue of a bull, carved of red brown stone like the foundations of the city, stood in one of the rooms to the left of the entrance.

On the stage a man in grey tweeds sat on a stone block and smoked a contemplative pipe. It was the owner of the furry donkey of the Posada de los Coronas — a Scotchman, and like ourselves, a traveller into Spain.

We fell into talk — talk of the things of Spain that antedate Tarik and his Berbers, that are older than Pelayo in the Cave of Covadonga, older than Rome, older than Carthage.

"That boy, for instance," said the Scotchman, and he pointed to the slumbering neatherd. "He was there when Hannibal came by. He's a line from Theocritus, if you like, living on after great Pan is dead. Seneca knew him, and Martial and Quintilian. Lope de Vega put him on the stage a dozen times over. He stared, wide-eyed, at the Don and Sancho. It was, you remember, to him and his fellows that the Knight discoursed of the Golden Age.

"Spain," he continued, "is the Past's last stronghold in Europe. Mediævalism, Gothicism, the imperialism of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius — both of them Spaniards — the pure paganism that was before Diana and the Divus Augustus . . . It's a rich patina that received its final polish at the hands of Philip II. With him, the history of Spain ended."

"But Velasquez," objected the Good Sport, who had been looking forward to the treasures of the Prado. "And Goya . . ."

"Velasquez is not Spanish at all, to my way of thinking. Goya, yes. His is the spirit Hispaniensis that pinned lampoons to the walls of Rome. I grant you

Goya. But Velasquez was Europe that came trooping over the Pyrenees in the wake of Charles V's gilded coach. It is significant of him that he spent his life in Madrid, the least Spanish of all Spain's cities. Closer to the soul of Spain was the Greek of Toledo. Born in Crete, trained in Venice and at Rome, Spain was his spiritual fatherland. It drew him inevitably. And no less inevitably, to Toledo."

"I find myself wondering what is Spain," I confessed. "Exactly where does it lie, this Spanish genius that has tantalized a host of travellers? What is it — the spiritual Pyrenees — that separates Spain from Europe?"

"Its imperturbability," said the Scotchman. "Spain is like one of her own beaches of shifting sand and imperturbable rock. That rock is Iberian. Against it, the ebb and flow of many tides have beaten, yet it remains — now as it was from the beginning. The Phœnicians landed there, but they did not stay. Greece came, then Carthage in her search for minerals. She forged herself anchors of silver from the mines south of Alicante. And then — Rome, in a great tidal wave that swept high on the beach and altered the curve of its sands and left the mark of its flood hour in walls and aqueducts such as you see at Tarragona and Segovia in citadels such as this," he swept a generous gesture toward the red walls looking down. "Rome is here still in other monuments even more enduring — in the shape of farm carts and harness, the crude farming implements. The Aragonese peasant farmer today uses tools that do not differ a hair's breadth from those with which he tilled the poet Martial's fields, while he and his faithful Marcella sat beneath their arbor discoursing of the joys of country life. As they sat so, you remem-

THE SLEEPER OF FARNALLS

ALONG THE GUADALAVIAR — VALENCIA

ANCIENT SAGUNTUM ON ITS STEEP HILL

ber, a company of soldiers passed along the road commanded by an aged centurion — Juvenal.

"You may read Rome in the cut of the sandals worn by the men in the fields below. In the fine shapes of the water jars brought to every village fountain. In the banners embroidered with the letters S. P. Q. R. that are borne in the religious processions. What do the letters mean? Your Spanish neighbor cannot tell you, except, that so it has been since the beginning.

"But Rome passed and Iberia remained. Remained to receive the Goths, and to turn them from Arianism to Christianity. Remained to receive the sharp impress of Islam, and to mould and change and modify it into something so different from the Islam of the East that Cordova became a new Mecca, and el Andaluz a rival to Mahomet's peacock gardens.

"When young Charles came in with his Flemings and threatened to turn the riches of Castile to their account, old Spain smiled. She had seen it tried before. And what happened? Within a generation the Low Countries were a mere appendage to the tail of Leon. Belgium, Holland, Naples, the Americas, set to serve the thing called Spain. The pride of Castile was not mocked. They made a proverb of it — 'If God were not God, He would be king of the Spains with the king of France for His cook.'

"So they have come — Phœnicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Rome, Goths and Moors, Austria, the Bourbons, Napoleon — and now," he made us an abrupt little bow, "and now America. You are the new invading host. You come with your circular tour tickets and your amazing facility for taking Europe under your wing. You demand hot water, and ice water, and steam

heat as Euric demanded the ears of his captives! And you get them, by George! Hannibal, as certain of your own poets have said, had nothing on you!"

We laughed, but there was a note of seriousness behind the lightly spoken words.

"To me, there is an element of pathos in the way America turns to Europe," I said. "We are perpetually asking to be reconvinced that the Past did exist. Laugh at us all you like about our insistence on creature comforts. What we are really running to earth is Romance."

"Ah, men have always come to Spain seeking that! When Veranius made the tour, his friend Catullus wrote that he was waiting eagerly to hear

"Of Spanish men, their names and places,
Of Spanish ladies' eyes and faces . . ."

Richard Ford transcribes it. There was a traveller! I would like to have ridden the roads in his company."

"Or with Madame d'Aulnoy. She came over the Pyrenees in 1679. Her letters are the Spain of Gil Blas."

"But with Borrow most of all."

We all agreed to that.

"Borrow's insight into Spain was the truer because he attacked Spain in the Spanish manner. He was a crusader. That is a spirit Spain finds easy to understand; to which it opens its heart. Like Don Quixote on the road before him, like Loyola disputing with the Saracen at Manresa and leaving it to God and his own horse which road to take, Borrow was a knight errant. As such he fits the Spanish scene."

"Whereas, Gautier and Street, Tichnor, even the admirable Ford, stand always on the outside looking on. Perhaps. Yet it was Gautier, was it not, who said that

Spain was not a country to be visited, but a spiritual experience?"

"Gautier slept one night of full moon in the Court of the Lions in the Alhambra," the Scotchman reminded me. "No man could do that and remain unchanged. Perhaps the answer lies just there. Spain is Kilmeny's wood, whence no traveller returns quite the same."

It was time to go. The sun having crossed the zenith, threw part of the red walls into shadow. The goat herd sat up and rubbed his eyes. The Scotchman, the Good Sport and I walked down the hill together. It was then that we asked him the reason of his Spanish journey.

"Mine is a sentimental pilgrimage," he told us. "We Scots are all sentimentalists at heart. Do you know Edinburgh? Ah, then you will know Prince's Crescent and the tall old houses there. My story begins in the back sitting-room of one of those houses with a small boy lying on the floor reading the Chronicles of Froissart.

"According to Sir John, when the Bruce died the Black Douglas set out to carry the hero's heart to the Holy Land. In the Low Countries he heard how the king of Castile was making a holy war on the Moorish King of Granada. Perhaps the Douglas relished a bit of fighting on the way. He took ship to Valencia, carrying the heart with him. Thence he rode south and west and joined himself to the king of Castile, as an ally.

"One day the Saracens and Christians rode out in full battle array to show themselves to each other like

a pair of fighting cocks. The Scots, knowing nothing of this kind of warfare, thought the battle about to begin. They rushed forward, crying, "Douglas! Douglas!" thinking the king of Castile would follow. But he did not. They were surrounded and cut off. Then the Douglas took the heart of the Bruce from under his cuirass and threw it far ahead into the thickest of the fray, crying, 'Go thou first as always,' and fought his way to it. But the Saracens were hard about him. He and all his men were killed."

"And the heart of the Bruce?"

"It was brought back and buried in Melrose Abbey. The story is Froissart's, not mine."

"It is a wonderful story."

"The small boy thought so. He said that some day he, too, would sail away to the 'port of Valence the great,' and travel over the mountains to the scene of that battle."

"And now he has?"

"At least, he has come thus far. And he has, as you know, bought himself a donkey and a pack saddle — all for eight guineas. Tomorrow he starts his wanderings on the Douglas' trail. A sentimental journey, if you like, but doesn't there come a time when life demands such a journey of one?"

The talk moved on to other things — to roads and routes and stopping places by the way. After our fortnight in Majorca, the Good Sport and I were to take almost the same trail over the mountains of Alicante to Granada and Seville. We might, in the chances of such a journey, find the Scotchman and his donkey somewhere along the way.

The blue tiled towers and domes of Valencia the

Great were visible for many miles across the *huerta* before we came to its gates.

The city lay peacefully in the curve of the river. Our road twisted like a waving white ribbon across the green *huerta* through villages and outreaching suburbs. Behind us, Saguntum was a rosy red mass on its lonely hill.

In the Pueblo de Farnalls, a church stood at the end of the single street, a white plaster building with a façade of colored tiles representing the Five Joyful Mysteries of the Virgin. It was as fresh and new and vividly colored as a Sunday School calendar. Before the church door in the dusty plaza rose a stone cross — older than the church, older than the village, one of the many that marked the pilgrim's way to the city of the Moor.

A young carter in blue jeans lay tumbled over on the steps of the cross fast asleep in the afternoon sun.

He did not waken when we stopped to photograph him to the delighted amusement of the rest of the village. Obviously, they considered it the joke of the season — all, but three white-coiffed nuns who came round the corner of the church as the photographing was in progress, and gathering up their skirts, bolted unceremoniously.

CHAPTER EIGHT

VALENCIA AND THE FALLAS OF SAN JOSÉ

"YOU have come for the Fallas?"

We tried not to look as blank as we felt.

"The Fallas? What is that?"

The young man in the bookshop who had asked the question, as he tied up our package paused, then began once more: "The Fallas — why, the Fallas of San José, *claró*."

We shook our heads, still mystified.

"Ah! you will see. It begins on Saturday quite early — *a las seis y media*. There is nothing like it elsewhere is Spain — the Fallas of San José at Valencia. You will see, señorita."

He nodded reassuringly.

We said our polite "*Buenas*" and went out. In the park under the palm trees the flower market was in full swing. The blue-tiled kiosks with their miniature blue domes the shape of a doughboy's helmet, were heaped with roses and stocks and carnations — the many colored *clavillos* of Spain, sweeter and looser petalled and richer in color than those that grow anywhere else in the world.

The pleasant languor of Spring was in the air. One café proprietor more enterprising than the rest, had set his tables about under the palm trees among the flowers. We sat down and ordered *horchata de chufas* — the pleasant drink of milk and toasted almonds and spices,

which is a specialty of Valencia, as the knife grinders' whistles are of Orense. It was bland and cool on the tongue, and tasted of fairyland.

Valencia suffers the disadvantage of its own prettiness. Its boulevard, the Glorieta, sweeps picturesquely along the river where the ancient walls were pulled down half a century ago to make a lounging and driving place for its citizens. Its bridges with their statues of saints and kings spring in graceful curves across the bed of the Guadalaviar in which there is so little water that a football field has been laid out on the central shoal with tiers of seats for the spectators against the embankments.

Its two magnificent fourteenth century gateways with their massive round towers and platforms and stairways from which the citizens could pour burning pitch on the besiegers, stand in a maze of clanging street traffic. Plebeian trams jangle their way through the arches.

Even the cathedral, which in most Spanish cities shares with the market place the life of the town, is put quite out of countenance by the greater popularity of the Virgin of the Foundlings lodged in a smaller church across the plaza.

In the seventeenth century this fatal Valencian desire for prettiness at any cost spread a frosting of painted stucco over the fine Gothic framework of La Seo. Only the transepts and the delicate stone lantern over the crossing defied the hand of the renovater to show how finely the early builders wrought.

The interior suffered most. Against that pink and gilded background, the Conquistador's spurs and bridle dangling grimly above the archbishop's throne seem as

out of place as in a lady's boudoir. Jaime delivered city and church from the Moors. He ordered a victorious Te Deum to be sung here on St. Michael's Day 1238. On that day, too, the bells in the Muezzin tower pealed from sunrise to sunset. Their jubilant echoes were borne across the *huerta* to the hills where the remnants of the fleeing Almohades sought refuge.

The bells and the saint gave the tower its new and present name Miguelete. The octagonal Gothic tower is to the Valencian what the Giralda is to the son of Seville — he pines out of sight of it, or away from the sound of its bells. These are rung at intervals by day and night to signal the ebb and flow of the waters to the *huerta.*

What early Gothic palaces once stood about La Seo were razed during the seventeenth century to make room for heavy buildings in the plateresque style beloved of Spanish builders. Through an open gate, we had a glimpse of a patio. Four old, gnarled grape vines grew in the corners. Their stems rose four stories to reach the sun. Later the leaves would entirely shade the fountain and the four grass plots edged with ivy and pink daisies and purple cinerarias. The palace must have had an episcopal connection, for several priests and a brown-cowled *decalzado* (bare-foot friar) came and went along the arcade. One closely barred door piqued us. It bore the legend:

Monte de Pietat de Clero.

Could this be a pawn shop "for clergy only?"

Particularly delightful to our eyes were the street traffic signs. These were tiles countersunk in the house walls at the entrance to each street. Each bore the

AWAITING THE TRIBUNAL OF THE WATERS — VALENCIA

ADMIRING THE FALLAS

crude design of a horse and cart headed in or out to show the "way" of the street for traffic.

Valencia's great man was St. Vincent Ferrer who held the rather dubious post of confessor to the anti-pope Benedict XIII. He was born here in 1355 in a house now a church and dedicated to him.

In a tiny gardened plaza off the Calle de Caballeros — The Street of the Knights! — what a sonorous address! — stands the stately, Renaissance Audiencia, Valencia's ancient seat of government, with its beautifully sculptured windows and portal. The rooms within have magnificent artesonado ceilings for which the *mudejar* craftsmen of Valencia were famous.

The Alcazar, where the Cid and Ximena lived and loved and ruled, has long since vanished. Valencia has little of her hero to show. Babieca's iron bit and bridle hang over the Door of the Lizard in Seville, and the Cid sleeps in Burgos with Ximena at his side.

On the site of their palace stands the Gothic silk hall — the Lonja. Its elaborately sculptured walls with their lovely *ajimez* windows and open upper gallery are surmounted by a cornice ornamented with a row of royal crowns.

Within the lower hall upheld by lovely twisted columns, as delicately simple as the stalks of a flower, the merchants of Valencia met each day and set the price for the now priceless brocades for which the city was famous. Around the cornice runs a motto: *He who hath never been guilty of usury shall alone inherit life eternal.* The words are in Latin but the idea behind them is of Islam.

The guardian unlocked for us a low door in one corner. It led into a tiny circular tower which was

entirely filled by a beautifully groined stone staircase, like the spiral of a nautilus. From the bottom one looks up a well only two inches in diameter to a speck of blue sky far above.

The pottery market of Valencia is one of the great markets of Spain. The sellers spread their yellow and green wares on the cobble stones beneath the tiled shrine of the Virgin of the Foundlings in Santa Catalina's wall. It runs over into the oval Plaza del Cid, whose centre is filled with stalls of poultry. Oh, the quackings and the screechings that come from that arched gateway! And the smells . . .

In the profligate days of Charles II, the Plaza del Cid was the centre of fashion and intrigue. Ladies in masks and bouffant brocades, gallants in periwigs, came and went through its gateway — the Spain of Gil Blas and Madame d'Aulnoy.

Near the archway we passed the open door of an herb shop. Bundles of dried stalks and pods were laid on the shelves. At the rear an old woman presided over a pair of apothecary's scales. A portrait of Linnaeus hung above her head. This seems usual throughout Spain, a curious complement to the Moor's head which is the sign of a chemist's shop in the Low Countries. An exchange of courtesies, as it were.

It may have been the very shop, portrait excepted, of that learned doctor of Valencia whom Philip II summoned to the bedside of pitiful Don Carlos. The prince lay gravely ill at the palace of Alcalá de Henares. One remedy after another was tried but with no relief. Someone advised an ointment, the secret prescription of a Valencian Moor. By the king's orders, the Moorish doctor was brought to attend the prince, but not before

the prince's confessor and the palace physician had tried another remedy of their own devising. The body of a dead monk — Brother Juan of Alcalá, noted during his life for his piety and more noted in death for the benefits supposed to be derived from touching his coffin — was brought from its burial place and laid in the bed beside the prince. Within a week Don Carlos began to mend. Opinion in Spain and throughout Europe was sharply divided between giving credit for the heir's recovery to the saint or to science.

But despite these things Valencia does not quite come off. It lacks the indescribable THAT which Sir Joshua said made a picture out of a painting.

It has, however, two curious ceremonies which supersede all its monuments — one, the Tribunal of the Waters which takes place every Thursday in the north gate of the cathedral, and the other the Miserere, which is sung on Friday mornings after the ten o'clock Mass at the Church of Corpus Christi.

We had timed our arrival to include them both, and all by good luck, and quite without foreknowledge on our part, we were to see the Fallas, too.

The Water Tribunal is one of the oldest courts in the world, a court which has neither lawyers nor briefs nor fees nor records. Its justice is summary and its punishment, if punishment is to be meted out, is swift — "Turn off his water."

About the noon hour on Thursdays, the Plaza de la Constitución awakes from its lethargy. A verger from the cathedral brings out an iron railing which he arranges about the portal, and eight solemn armchairs, each with

the name of a district of the *huerta* inscribed on its back — the *Acequia de Favara*, *Acequia de Rascana*, etc. A little crowd begins to gather. Two priests coming out of the Archbishop's Palace across the plaza stop, toss the long ends of their black cloaks over their shoulders and light *cigarrillos*; a nursemaid in a white ruffled cap like a peony, pinned to her head with a pair of Valencian filigree gold balls the size of pigeons' eggs, and earrings and necklace to match, hurries her two small charges to the spot, lest they miss something. Young recruits in khaki berets with dangling red tassels, workmen, loungers, and a scattering of country folk in neat black smocks, head kerchiefs and aprons, crowd close to the railing. The Miguelete tolls the hour. From the Puerto de los Apostoles comes a verger in a black gown carrying a long ebony staff which has a silver top like a boat hook, and behind him eight peasants in full black smocks, black trousers and white *alpargatas*. They take their allotted seats. The Tribunal is open.

The first case to be heard is that of a young farmer who asks permission to build a water gate in the irrigating canal between his rice fields. He comes into the enclosure and states his case. The members of the Tribunal hear him without comment. Their faces, lined and seamed and tanned to the color of their own fields, are serious, attentive. The young man ends his petition, the judges look from one to another; nod, and the President in one curt sentence gives the desired permission. The young man bows, and retires. He is lost in the crowd.

Two peasants push through the spectators. The verger clears a way for them with his staff; they come

inside the railing. Ah, this is exciting! A quarrel, perhaps! The crowd presses close. The men are speaking, rapidly, gesticulating, accusing, pleading. The judges lean forward intently. Their eyes, shrewd, little peasant eyes, narrow; their lips part in the efforts to comprehend.

The sympathy of the spectators is divided. There are murmurings of: "*Verdad!*" "*Tiene razón,*" "*Buena cosa es ésa!*" The litigants, conscious of the effect they are producing grow more dramatic; one beats his breast, challenges high heaven with his clenched fist.

Oh, for sufficient Spanish to understand!

The President puts up his hand. Gnarled, work-twisted fingers whose authority is of the plough, the rake and the spade. He puts a question, and another. The litigants reply. The President looks from one to another of the seven judges — there are nods, dubious at first, but growing more emphatic as it appears that all are in agreement. He addresses the plaintiff, hands down the decision and fixes the blame. The little man in the grey smock seems to have gotten the worst of it; he draws down his lips, jerks his cap forward resentfully, and elbows his way out of the crowd.

The verger looks about for other cases, but there are none. The Tribunal of the Waters is over. It is the last remnant left in Spain of the Moorish form of administering justice "in the gate."

If the Water Tribunal, in its simplicity, its want of ceremony, and the trappings with which Justice later invested herself, is persistently Oriental, the Miserere at the Church of Corpus Christi is pure mediævalism. Not even Seville, in its observance of Holy Week, outdoes the mystery of that moment when, Mass being

concluded, the clergy and choir vested in black and gold file down the dim church between rows of kneeling penitents to the chancel. Now there is no blaze of lights on the altar, no gleam of white and silver and gold brocades, no incense, no flowers. Only the age-old consciousness of man's sin and his need of redemption.

A swelling chord of organ music fills the air; fifty voices break out in the immemorable plea:

"*Have mercy upon us, O God.*"

Above the altar hangs a painting of the Last Supper, by Ribalta. As organ and voices rise imploringly, this sinks slowly out of sight. There is no sound, no creak of windlass or ropes, no evidence of human aid at all as the picture disappears. In its room, hang long curtains of violet silk.

They waver for a moment as though in premonition.

"*Against thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight . . .*"

The curtains part. Behind them, stark and agonizing, appears the figure of the Crucified, dead white, dead black, against a background of burnished gold.

"*Lord, have mercy upon us!*"

Voices of men and boys and the great VOX HUMANI crying in unison the need of all humanity. From the black-clad kneeling women a sob is heard. The organ and the voices and that dying Figure in whom is symbolized the tragedy of all mankind. The voices rise higher . . . higher . . . break . . . die away . . . only the surge of the organ — like the chastened beat and retreat of the sea waves after a storm, remains. The violet curtains come together . . . the altar piece returns to its frame as noiselessly as it disappeared. The Miserere is over.

The BOOK, meaning Baedecker, had warned us that ladies were not admitted to this ceremony unless dressed in black and wearing *mantillas*. But alas for picturesqueness! Here, too, the old order was changed to the extent of a bench across the rear of the church set apart for *touristas*.

The ceremony does not end with the Miserere. With three or four wide-eyed country folk we returned to the Chapel of the Relics, where a priest unlocked the gilded doors of the cabinet across one wall of the chapel. On five red velvet shelves were ranged coffers and reliquaries containing the bones of as many saints and martyrs. I calculated hastily — about one hundred.

The priest took up a long wooden pointer. He presented the tip to a small acolyte who kissed it devoutly, then touched with it the first reliquary at the left of the top shelf. From a crimson-bound book the boy read aloud, and as fast as he could, the name and properties of the saint whose bone was there enshrined. The pointer moved on — and on —. The childish voice grew shriller and more shrill. Desperately the reader fought to keep one eye on the page, and one on the moving wooden finger. In the middle of the third shelf he had to stop for breath. The race ended with the priest several saints in the lead.

The most interesting treasure of the College is not shown to visitors. This is the Virgin of the Three Borgias, so called because it holds the portraits of three members of that family — Duke Juan, Jaffrey and Cæsar. The Duchess of Gandia gave it in memory of her husband. Had we been men, we might have gained admittance and a sight of the curious memorial, but the college is *clausura* to women.

The spirit of Valencia, as of so much in Spain, divides between these two ceremonies. Spain is patiently, persistently agrarian. She is mystical, and dramatic, and credulous. And she is, on occasion, hysterically gay.

The occasion was the Feast of San José.

It seems not without irony that the guardian of the family hearth and all homely virtues should be celebrated with three days mad revelry, three days of gun powder and brass bands, *corridas de toros*, dancing and buffoonery.

It began according to promise at half past six in the morning. A drummer went from quarter to quarter, and drummed the Valencians from their beds. Bang! From the Plaza de la Reina came a deafening explosion. Bang — Bang — BANG!! Bundles of fire crackers affixed to lamp posts the length of the Calle Peris y Valero went off in sharp succession. The Miguelete began to peal. The bells in Santa Catalina's tower answered. A sober looking citizen walking down the middle of the tram line paused every six paces to hurl a torpedo on the cobble stones. Our breakfast coffee came in with a smile. The Fallas had begun.

The origin of the word Fallas is lost in antiquity. Specifically, it means the giant stages with grotesque figures — one cannot call them floats since the majority are stationary — which are erected in each quarter of the city for the three days celebration. Colloquially, it is used for the fiesta itself.

The celebration had its origin in the Spring feast of the mediæval craftsmen's guilds. From the fourteenth to the seventeenth century Valencia was the centre of the artistic life of Spain. The tortuous dark streets behind Santa Catalina's church are still lined with work-

shops where goldsmiths, iron workers, weavers, *carpinteros de blanco*, potters and wood carvers labor at their crafts. Here were made the famous *azulejos* that roofed southern Spain, as well as the beautiful iridescent tiles in Arabic designs used for patios and fountains and wainscotings of Andalusian palaces. The secret of their manufacture is now a lost art, lost with the Moors and the Mudejar workmen whom Philip *el Piodoso* drove from his shores. Here were painters, too, men who had studied under Leonardo, and Raphael and Michael Angelo. The connection with Rome and Florence was constant. Here in 1474 was set up the first printing press in Spain, the first book bindery. Students and apprentices in their colored velvet caps and cloaks thronged the streets.

The Guilds made the feast day of St. Joseph, patron of carpenters and craftsmen, a carnival of their own. Church and City gave them three days holiday. Being artists and Spanish, with Spain's singular genius for the drama, their festival quickly took on a dramatic character. Plays and puppet shows were given in the streets. The best poets turned out *autos* for the occasion.

What part had Cervantes or Lope de Vega in the development of the Fallas? The latter dramatist who created no fewer than eighteen hundred plays, lived in enforced seclusion in Valencia for eight of his most creative years.

We joined the holiday crowd and went about to visit each *falla* in turn. There could be little doubt of the direction, the human tide flowed steadily through the streets from quarter to quarter; one had no choice but to move with it.

At every street corner refreshment stands had been

set up selling *churros* and *buñuelos* and the sweet-frosted *rosquillas* that are the concomitant of Spanish saints' days. Boys hawked baskets of fried potato chips to be nibbled while one drank an *aguardiente*.

It was a dun-colored crowd in which black head kerchiefs and the grey smocks of the Valencian countrymen predominated. Now and again a cavalcade of riders cantered through the streets. Behind the horsemen rode young girls in the Valencian festal costume — a full-skirted gown of flowered silk brocade with a deep fall of lace around the neck and short, full sleeves. From the back of the collar, ribbon streamers floated to the hem. The hair was dressed high to a gilded comb, and without a *mantilla*. Many of the dresses were old, dating from the days of the Bourbon Kings, and worthy of a place in a museum.

The crowd was thickest in the street before our hotel where the prize *falla* — a locomotive and three coaches constructed on heavy motor trucks, moved up and down at intervals during the day and night. Through the windows of the coaches leaned figures — a lady and an officer, a priest in a beaver hat, a *guardia civile*, a gypsy, a country woman holding up her little boy to see the sights of the town, snub-nosed peasants in smocks, their papier mâché lips wide in buccolic amazement, workmen, dandies and an English tourist, Mister Bluff, in a check suit with a Baedecker in his hand. This character seemed universally popular — he appeared in nearly every *falla*. The last coach was reserved for the musicians. The brass throats of the horns protruded from the windows; their blare filled the street.

Around the corner toward the Glorieta a great white ship had been erected in the centre of the traffic. Over

the taffrail leaned sailors and passengers; a romantic couple occupied chairs in the bow; from mast head and rigging floated the banners of Spain and of Valencia. We read the name across the bow: "De l'Atre Mon."

There were other *fallas* beside these, not so understandable to a stranger, even with the help of the ballad books "Penny plain and twopence colored," sold by small street urchins, or the lampoons pasted on the walls. *Villabufanda*, they were headed. Some were in the forms of telegrams, others in doggerel *valenciana* verse, as:

"Chiques qu'admiren las fallas
vullo donar vos un consell;
No deixen qu'en els tumultos
vos arreprete algun vell."

Meanwhile, by day and by night there was "*música*" — much *música*. A band to a quarter, making gay before the *fallas* for the young people to dance. And at intervals there were terrific fusillades of firecrackers fastened to wires on the level of the second story windows all up and down the street. The noise in the narrow *calles* was deafening.

But Valencia loved it. The face of the city was one broad smile. The chambermaids beat time with their brooms and spent most of their day hanging out of the windows calling to the crowds in the street below. It was an orderly crowd. Indeed that is one of the first things that one notices about any street scene in Spain. There was no pushing, no shoving, no irritation. The human mass moved as one unit . . .

Up and down, up and down — from nine in the morn-

ing with a cessation of the hours from one to four, until far into the night.

Late sleep was out of the question. Each morning of the *fiesta* the drummers marched through the streets at half past six sounding reveille. Every midnight was ushered in by an extra bombardment of gun powder. And on two afternoons, there were bull fights — the finest of the year.

It is the last night of the *fiesta*. In the Calle de la Nave, they are dancing before the *falla* of the English tourist, Mister Bluff, and the street is filled with swaying, twirling figures. On a doorstep opposite to us a soldier and a girl sit hand in hand; from the balconies come low voices and laughter, the movement of dark figures, the scent of crushed geranium leaves. The music, the fitful light throwing the images of the *falla* into grotesque silhouette, that maze of moving figures — and overhead, the pale Spring stars.

As midnight draws near, the music in the street below grows louder, gayer, the dancing wilder. The cannon crackers hung in festoons along the house fronts go off in a series of deafening explosions. Madder grows the music, faster and more fast. The bell of the Miguelete begins its midnight peal. At the end of the street, three figures appear. The central one brandishes a lighted torch. Down the street they come, leaping in a mad processional of their own devising, the dancers parting before them. On, past the doorway groups and the musicians, up to the base of the *falla*. There is a sputter, a thin column of acrid smoke that winds upward, and then the whole gigantic mummery bursts into flames.

The fire lights the narrow canyon of a street to a brightness it never knows by day. It throws into bold relief sculptured doorways and windows, the wrought ironwork of balconies and *rejas*, a Gothic arch that leads into a coal cellar. It lights with savage intensity the faces of the men and women leaning over the balconies looking down.

The music ceases, and musicians and dancers stand solemnly before the burning pyre watching the passing of its glory. Higher mount the flames, higher and higher; a bit of blazing drapery floats high above the roofs, the sky beyond is inflamed by other sacrificial fires in other quarters of the town. Gradually the brightness diminishes, the flames sink, the frame of the *falla* totters and falls inward in a shower of sparks.

In groups of twos and threes, the dancers depart; their feet lag on the stones. A child's voice begins to cry wearily. Where the *falla* stood, there is only a pile of charred embers . . .

Around the corner sounds the thin call of *el sereno:* "*A-a-ave Mari-i-a Purissima! a la uno y sereno!*"

The Fallas of San José is over.

CHAPTER NINE

A BALEARIC INTERLUDE — I

A MASSIVE Gothic fortress church, rock-ribbed and buttressed, towering from a steep masonry cliff out of the sea against the sunrise sky . . . the long jewelled fingers of the East reaching through the arch of flying buttresses . . . a jumble of blue and buff and ochre houses skirting the harbor behind listless date palms . . . a tangle of masts and spars and henna-colored sails . . . and over all, purple and blue against the rosy dawn, the stark outline of Puig Mayor — that was Palma de Mallorca.

We had our first glimpse of it from the cluttered deck of the Don Jaime II. The Balearic Isles lie forty miles off the shore of Spain. One has choice of ways of reaching them by steamer, from Barcelona, the shortest route, from Alicante, or Malaga, or Valencia. The boats go direct to Palma, the capital of the largest island, whence smaller craft ply to Soller and Pollensa; to Port Mahon the capital of Minorca with its memories of Nelson and Lady Hamilton, and to the smaller, more distant and less visited Iviza. Formentera, the fourth island of the group, is scarcely more than a rock in the lee of Iviza.

A lost capital, Palma; a somnolent, ochre-colored city dreaming beside its tideless bay. Its cathedral by

the sea wall is accounted among the four finest specimens of Gothic churches in the world. Beside it rises the heavy silhouette of the Almudaina, the alcazar of the one time sultans of the isles. Its sea front is fretted with balconies whence the emir watched his pirate fleet. Don Jaime, the Conquistador, feasted there for eight days after the conquest while he gave the city up to his soldiery for sack. He took care first, however, to select for himself the richest treasures of the ousted Moors. These he offered at auction to replenish the purse of Aragon.

With the fourth and last king of Majorca, all semblance of royalty fled the rambling vermillion palace by the sea front. It is a barracks, now.

The cathedral, the Almudaina, and the lovely Gothic Lonja within its tiny grove of date palms — these are Palma's sights. From the quay and the maze of shipping there the wide, tree-lined Borne leads lazily into the town. One feels that it is a long time since anything happened there; that it will be still longer before anything happens again. Majorca is that happy country which has no history since the fourteenth century. Other Spanish towns are listless, dispirited, but the tranquillity of Palma is positive. It is not Life which has failed Palma, but Palma which has withdrawn from Life.

Mago, a younger brother of the redoubtable Hannibal, is reputed to have been the first master of the isles. His name survives in Port Mahon. After him came the Romans. The great Cæsar recruited stone slingers from the natives of the Greater (Majorca) and Lesser (Minorca) Balearics for his campaign in Britain. In the eighth century the Arabs established a sultanate at

Palma which lasted till the coming of Jaime the Conquistador.

And there the history of Majorca ends. What happened before Mago, who were the people who built the great Cyclopean towers, Talayots, some of them fifty feet high, still to be seen here and there on the larger islands, and the Druidic stone circles on the island of Minorca, is archælogical surmise. All that has happened since Sancho Panza ruled in the Almudaina is the lengthening and shortening of the shadow of San Nicholas' octagonal lantern tower on the pavement of the Borne, the soft pad of hemp-soled sandals on the ivy-grown steps which lead to the summit of La Seo's hill, the weathering of the brown and orange sails of the harbor craft, and the annual influx and exodus of English visitors who claim to have discovered Palma. The pink and blue villas with their hanging gardens of geraniums and cinerarias and bougainvillea along the heights of El Terreno house dozens of retired colonels, widows and elderly spinsters come south to escape the rigors of the Anglo Saxon winter. There is an English tea room — it might have been transplanted straight from Salisbury High Street — a tennis club, and a chaplain with a Yorkshire burr. The policeman who stands guard at the entrance to the Borne wears a tiny Union Jack pinned to his tunic — a pretty Mallorcan compliment to *les inglesi.*

The cathedral on its sea wall, with the beat and retreat of the waves far below its foundations sounding in its aisles so that on days after storm the sea music threatens the music of the organ, is Palma's chief glory. Its beauty consists not in ornament; indeed, but for the richly carved choir stalls, there is little decorative

THE VIEW OF PALMA FROM THE SEA

THE CLOISTER OF SAN FRANCISCO — PALMA

A COUNTRY ROAD IN MAJORCA

A MAJORCAN FARM HOUSE

THE RUINED CASTILLO DEL REY NEAR POLLENSA

detail to take the eye from the long, cool gray vistas, that are shot with light — crimson and lapiz and green and gold from the tall lancet windows of the clerestory. Fortunately, the cathedral of Palma has no coro to block the long straight line of vision from the western door that is opened only for the burial of one bishop and the installation of his successor, to the high altar with its surmounting panoply of cords and tassels and silver lamps.

The eye is completely satisfied.

Every cathedral has its hour — the one supreme moment of the day when it seems to realize all the mystic dreams that have gone into its creation. I went again and again to Palma's La Seo seeking to catch that one high moment. But I never caught it — quite. Is it the climax of High Mass on Sunday, with the procession of purple canons and a venerable stoop-shouldered bishop weighted down by his cope of scarlet damask, threading a slow way along the aisles? Hundreds of tiny candle flames prick the scented dusk. The swelling chords of the organ fill the great nave, so that the whole majestic church seems to open its mouth and sing with the voice of Isaiah: "Blessing, and power, and glory, and thanksgiving . . ."

Or is it that still moment of late afternoon when the last glory of the sunset flames through the rose window over the sea door and seems to tumble all the jewels of heaven on the broken floor-stones? Two old peasant women, each carrying a lighted candle, kneel before the grating door of one of the chapels. Very far away in the gloom of the *capilla mayor* the silver lamps twinkle above the altar. A distant humming fills one's ears — the surge and beat and retreat of the sea

far, far down in caverns under the cliff on which the church is built.

Palma's market tumbles down a long flight of steps into the Borne in a multicolored medley of pottery and oranges, and the purple and magenta shawls of fine woolen cloth that are such a picturesque part of the peasant costume. On Saturdays there is a bottle market in the Plaza Aceite behind the general market square. Old Mallorcan glass is a treasure for collectors. The modern products in amber and sea green are scarcely less entrancing.

More than one market woman wore the demure *bolante* of white net which comes up over the back of the head in a point and fits around the chin, falling in a frill over the throat and breast. It is the only cap in the Spains, if one excepts the Catalan bandeau of plaid silk. Under the *bolante* the hair is braided to hang down the back in a plait tied with a black ribbon. And this regardless of the age of the wearer.

The Majorcans are famous cabinet makers. In more than one open shop that is scarcely more than a recess from the cobblestoned street, one sees in process of manufacture chairs and settles and long carved chests. These are carved and joined by artist workmen, and painted vermillion and gold, like the antique ones which, with the brocades, form no small portion of the wealth in the palaces of Majorca's nobility. The islands used to be famous, too, for enamels, but this ancient art is fast disappearing.

The lovely old needlecraft of the islands has been given fresh life by an American woman artist and her husband who make their home in Palma, and have

opened a shop where the peasant sewing women may find a market for their work. Not only that, but they have discovered and are preserving antique designs of stitchery that are truly Majorcan. Much of this is done in a soft henna shade that results from one of the island dyes.

Majorca boasts what is assuredly the most exclusive social system in the world. Beside its rigid code, the Almanach de Gotha's forty-nine quarterings seem careless and haphazard. When Don Jaime the Conquistador conquered the islands, he divided lands and titles among nine of his knights. From them are descended the present nobility. For seven centuries marriages outside the charmed circle have been frowned upon.

The palaces of the Nine — they seem to demand a capital — stand in the meandering maze of streets behind La Seo. Over high plaster walls we had hints of hidden gardens — the tropical luxuriance of a banana tree, a tall date palm from which fell a cascade of yellow jasmine, a purple torrent of bougainvillea . . .

Somewhere near the Montesión we came on a tiny plaza. It was walled all about, but a gate in the farther wall stood open. A path bordered with stocks, pink and purple, led across a green space to the door of a convent chapel. Beside the gate, the porteress sat nodding in the sun. Through the wide door of the chapel, we saw a very fat priest seated in an armchair before the altar, and on a wooden bench in front of him, their backs to us, seven little novices in humble white veils taking instruction.

Other gates in the broad impassive fronts of the great houses give vistas of stone-paved courtyards, each with its central cistern and iron well head. Around the

courts run tiers of stone-vaulted galleries, lifted on stout columns from which the arches spring in the generous fluent curves that are the distinguishing feature of Majorcan architecture. From each court-yard a handsome stone staircase mounts to the living rooms above. The ground floors are used for offices and the porter's lodge.

One of the finest of them all in the Calle Montenegro, the town house of the counts of that name, has fallen from its once proud estate. The tall façade with the arms of the Despuigs over the gate looks down on trade. In the high ceiled library, George Sand was shown the map which once belonged to Americus Vespucius. By some mischance she upset an ink bottle over the surface, and blotted out a continent! Overcome with horror and shame for what she had done, she gathered up her skirts and fled, without apology or explanation. The map is still preserved in the city museum, and the name of the great Frenchwoman is still spoken by Mallorcans with polite disdain.

Another ancient house close to the Cathedral has two delicately sculptured windows. Around the frame runs a garland of leaves and flowers in beautiful low relief, all softened and wrinkled and turned a creamy rose color by the passing centuries. Was it from one of these, perhaps, that the lovely Genoese Bianca de Picany, leaned to watch the pageant of the street? And so, Ramon Lull, riding by to his duties as page at the palace, saw her and lost his heart?

It was a rather susceptible heart. Lull was known as the most profligate young gallant of Palma. His love affairs were notorious. It mattered to him not at all that the lovely Genoese was the wife of one of his

THE FOUNTAIN IN THE COURTYARD OF ALFABIA

THE CLOISTER GARDEN OF LA CATUJA, VALLDEMOSA

ALONG THE WATERFRONT — SOLLER

THE ROAD OVER THE COL DE SOLLER

THE GARDEN OF GEORGE SAND AND CHOPIN AT VALLDEMOSA

RAYXA, THE COUNTRY ESTATE OF THE COUNTS OF MONTENEGRO

master's knights. He pursued her even to the point of riding his horse up the steps and in at the door of Santa Eulalia whither she went to pray. He wrote her verses after the manner of the time. One day, receiving from him a poem on the theme of her bosom, she called him into her presence, and uncovering herself before him, disclosed a cancer by which her breast was slowly being consumed.

That moment marked a turning point in Ramon Lull's life. He went back to the palace a changed man, taciturn and somber. His old gay companions knew him no more. He put off his velvets and his cap with the trailing feather for the coarse serge and hempen girdle of St. Francis, whose story so closely parallels his own.

But Lull was no recluse. In him burned a spirit which could not be put out. He determined to devote his life to the conversion of the Moslem-world. To that end he not only studied Arabic himself, but with the king's aid he founded a school for the instruction and training of missionaries. From that school, centuries later, Father Junipero Serra, another Mallorcan, set forth to preach the Gospel in New Spain. The missions along the Camino del Rey from San Diego to San Francisco are sprung from seed sown by Ramon Lull, the mystic.

Surely, in all the amazing fourteenth century world, Lull is perhaps the most amazing figure. He is everywhere — in Montpellier, preaching and writing his novel Blanquerna, the forerunner of More's Utopia; in Rome, pleading with the Pope for support of missionary undertakings in Tunis and Algeria; in Naples and Palestine and Egypt and Ethiopia. The known world

cannot contain him. His legend runs into the supernatural. He is Paracelsus. He is a master of the Black Arts. He walks across Europe to hold an hour's converse with Duns Scotus in Paris. Edward I summons him to England to reveal the secret of the Philosopher's Stone.

Twentieth century practical common sense stands amazed before the figure of Ramon Lull, doctore illuminate, as the old chroniclers call him. Pope Pius IX beatified him. The Franciscans, especially those of Mallorca, urged his canonization, but the Dominicans demurred. The controversy, in Majorca, ran into a riot. For days a mob with banners paraded the street before La Seo. The Bishop, who sided with the Dominicans, had to be spirited secretly out of his palace on the sea wall and got away to the mainland for safety. At that time the alms basins in the churches had tiny pewter figures of the great Majorcan mounted in the center, but these were forbidden by papal decree. What an enchanting object for a collector's quest this presents!

In Majorca the spirit of Ramon Lull has never died. He is to Palma what Francis is to Assisi, Catherine to Siena, and Theresa to the grey-walled city of Avila. Denied sainthood by the conclaves of the Church, he is canonized in the hearts of the Majorcans whose schools still teach his philosophy, whose theologians are Lullianos, or anti-Lullianos. One wonders whether it is this very Lullian philosophy, a mystic self-abandonment in the love of God, which makes the thought and culture of Majorca so distinct from that of Spain.

From an American, long a resident of Palma, we received a letter to Father K —, the famous Lulliano,

with whom, alas, we had no tongue in common. A card from him, however, opened to us the library of the Montesión with its precious Lull manuscripts. These are not his own, but contemporary copies made by a Franciscan of Palma for their monastery library. The librarian viewed us at first with distrust. Never before had he opened those sacred archives to a woman. And not until we gave promise and proof that we carried neither camera nor scissors concealed about us, did he trust the great, vellum-bound volumes in our hands.

It is about the church and monastery of San Francisco that the spirit of Ramon Lull lingers. The church has a tall flat front in which is recessed a richly carved portal and rose window above it. Wide beds of dark purple violets scented the tiny plaza before the door. The interior is uninteresting, but against the wall of a side chapel is the narrow sarcophagus which holds the Blessed's dust. The effigy, that of a wizened old man, lies uncomfortably on its side, and leans perilously from the wall. Lull met a martyr's death in Bugia. A Genoese sea captain begged the body and brought it to Palma, thinking to turn several golden florins by selling it to the pious Majorcans.

San Francisco's cloister is the loveliest in Palma, and the white irises in its garden are bigger and whiter and more sweetly scented with their orris fragrance than any we had seen elsewhere. The lean Brother Gardener, working about the beds with his brown robe well girded up from the mold, heard our enthusiasms and recognized us for what we were — of the confraternity of garden lovers. He had only Majorquin, the dialect of the islands, and which is a corruption of Catalan, and we an atrocious mixture of French and

castellano. But we made it do. We talked of irises and parrot tulips, of the efficacy of a horse-shoe tied to a quince tree to make it bear, and we came away the richer for a pinch of seed of yellow stock.

THE VIEW FROM MIRAMAR

A BARRACA OF THE RICEFIELDS — VALENCIA

ALONG ALICANTE'S WATER FRONT

CHAPTER TEN

A BALEARIC INTERLUDE — II

THE conveyance of the islands is *tipico* — a box-like cart, varnished yellow, with tiny windows on either side fitted with sliding inside shutters. One mounts the steps at the rear, the driver on his box pulls a string which closes the door, and so hermetically sealed, one is jolted over the cobblestoned streets or along the dusty country roads. Bold spirits let down the shutters and trust to the heavy linen curtains to shield them from curious gaze.

We took the afternoon diligence to Valldemosa, the tiny village with the monastery where George Sand and Chopin lived for their winter of sunshine, perched on the hillside above Palma to the northeast. Our companions were country folk returning home after the day's market; gentle-eyed women and slow, silent men. There was none of the garrulity of Spain.

The road threaded groves of grey-leafed olives, the tree trunks twisted and distorted like the forests in a Rackham drawing; orchards of almonds, and, beneath and around all these, rows of white flowered broad beans whose scent sweetened the whole countryside. There was a constant humming of bees in the blossoms. The diligence drew up at a crossroads and a woman got in. She had a black silk handkerchief knotted under her chin, and she carried in her arms a young lamb. It

bleated when the diligence rocked, and thrust its little black muzzle against her cheek for comfort.

There was about it all a happy, nursery tale atmosphere, quite in keeping with the Mallorcan custom of giving the children rosaries of sugar plums on All Saints' Day. One remembered that the ancient name for the islands was Eudemones, the Land of Good Genii. If Silenius lurks in the olive groves, or Pan comes out o'nights and sounds his pipes near the sheep cotes, they, too, have been tamed to a nursery safeness by the prevailing south wind.

The village of Valldemosa, when one arrives at it up the steep, is uninspiring enough — a huddle of nondescript houses about the church and the rambling pile of the Cartuja. Once, long after the conquest, a party of Saracen pirates landed on the coast below and climbed to the town whence they carried away three hundred women captives. It is hard to conceive of so large a female population in the tiny hamlet.

One enters the church from a dusty, grassless plaza, and immediately finds oneself walking over roses. The floor is made of Majolica tiles — a floor for Watteau shepherdesses and minuets, not, it would seem for cowled monks bound to silence and penitence. Around the walls of the sacristy stood several beautiful old walnut armoires, and fine mirrors of seventeenth century workmanship. The tiny lavabo had a brass spigot — shaped like Peter's cock.

Beyond the church runs the long vaulted corridor from which the tiny houses open separately. Here, by the rule of St. Bruno, each brother dwelt in single blessedness in his own house of three rooms and tiny walled garden that opens to the west with a long view down the valley to Palma and the sea.

The Carthusians were gone when Madame Dudevant climbed the hill seeking quarters more suited to the slenderness of the literary purse, and higher, purer air for her petulant invalid. In November 1838, Chopin wrote:

"I have a cell, that is to say three rooms and a garden full of oranges and lemons, for thirty-five francs a year in the large monastery of Valldemosa."

He had his piano too, and his genius to keep him company while George Sand scribbled away at her untidy writing table amid a flutter of papers, and her little dog chased his tail about the room and gave the composer a theme.

He had, too, for consolation and delight, the tiny square of terrace garden on which the living room of the "cell" opens.

The mountainside falls away sharply from the terrace wall. Far below in the valley, between the two mountain ridges, stretch almond orchards. In February that valley, indeed the whole island, is shrouded in a rosy haze of blossoms. On the mountain sides, and reaching high up among the crags wherever a pocket of earth can be made to hold them, are olive trees. The harvesting, we were told, is done by the young girls.

We lingered there on the terrace waiting for the final glory of the sunset behind the distant towers of Palma. A pure golden light flooded the valley and caused the soft grey green leaves of the olive trees to glimmer delicately. Down below, the village goatherd called his flock from the hills and drove them slowly up the path to Valldemosa. The caretaker, in her white *bolante*, brought glasses of musty red wine and some hard little cakes flavored with anise, and sat with us on the

parapet between the pots of stocks and fuchsias to watch the sunset.

There is another garden of Valldemosa, the enclosed formal garden of the monastery cloister with its stone fountain shaped like a conventionalized tulip flower, and its oranges and myrtles and laurel trees. But that garden is closed to visitors. One may only peep through the grill that closes the arches.

Valldemosa, like Palma, is a trifle ashamed of George Sand. It speaks with greater pride of Catalina Tomás, the Blessed, the serving maid who saw visions, and whose piety won her a place as a servant at Raixa, the country house of the Despuigs, where her duty was to mend the linen and inspire the household to godliness.

We took the Military Road from Andraitx to Bañalfufar. The road twisted and wove a difficult way through the steep mountains. Down below us in the narrow valleys were tiny farmsteads — each one threatened by landslides. Each house has as part of its equipment, a stout nail beside the door. On this is hung the door key when the farmer and his wife are at market or at work in the distant fields. The stranger going by may unlock and enter and rest; and one wonders why the lock, but perhaps that gives point to the hospitality.

The wildest and most beautiful scenery in the island lies in the tumble of hills which rise from its northwestern shore. The villages are few, the tiny farms scattered widely over the scraggy mountain sides.

Above towered the verdureless jagged peaks. Again and again, as the road curved, we had everchanging vistas of the sea.

Bañalfufar was a crescent of white houses set off

with bright blue window and door frames. Behind it rose the mountain wall, before it the sea. The boats were in, and the long, sea-smelling brown nets were stretched over the rocks drying in the sun. Two white-coiffed nuns marshalled a queue of children in pinafores along the sea wall. Each child held a tiny nosegay of flowers. As they walked, they sang.

Beyond Bañalfufar lies Miramar, the estate of the late Archduke Ludwig Salvator. This Hapsburg princeling retired to exile in Majorca after the death of the princess to whom he was betrothed, and there for forty-eight years he remained a romantic recluse until he returned to Austria in 1913 to die.

Miramar was the site of Ramon Lull's missionary college. On a jutting crag over the sea where the philosopher was wont to retire for meditation and prayer, stands a small marble chapel. Its foundation is laid on two stones — one from Bugia, the scene of Lull's martyrdom; the other from San Francisco, California, the city founded by Father Junipero Serra, who was once a pupil at Miramar.

Ludwig Salvator's white palace looks down over terraced gardens and vineyards of Malmsey grapes to the sea and the curving headland. The Foradada (the Pierced) is its Arab name — so called for the circular hole high up in the rock wall through which one looks out to sea, as through a ship's port. Ludwig Salvator used the tiny harbor for his yacht, and the Foradada as a convenient landing stage. The long black hulk still lies rotting at Palma's wharf just as the Archduke left it. His whole vast estate was willed to his secretary. The hills above Miramar are densely wooded. Ludwig Salvator brought a Teutonic regard for forests

to Mallorca. He bought acre after acre to preserve the growth of pine and chestnut. But he always bought all his firewood elsewhere!

Deya on its conical hill ringed round with orange and lemon trees, and Soller with its famous, narrow-throated harbor guarded by a winking lighthouse, and its curve of fishermen's houses, lay basking in the sun. Behind the latter, rise the craggy outlines of Puig Mayor with the famous pass — famous for its fifty hairpin curves, leading over the divide to Valldemosa.

From the harbor of Soller, St. Ramon de Peñafort is said to have set forth on his miraculous sea voyage. Unmindful of the sorry fate that befell the Bishop of Gerona, he undertook to reprove Don Jaime for his Don Juan adventures in the islands. He threatened, if the Conquistador did not mend his ways, to go back to Barcelona, and leave him without Bishop or Confessor.

The seventy-year old monarch did not take this seriously. He replied that he would not furnish the Saint with a boat for the journey. St. Ramon smiled. He spread his cloak on the waters of Soller harbor, set up his crook for a mast, and his scapular for a sail, and sailed away around the headland leaving Jaime to stare and rub his eyes in bewilderment!

Pollensa on the east shore of the island lies removed from the path of the casual tourist. The little island railway stops miles short of the town. One must follow the wide valley that opens on the harbor in the bumping diligence. It is windmill country, threaded by sluggish canals. Scores of low wide-winged mills were bringing up water for the bean fields. From the mountain heights to the northwest, the ruins of an ancient Arab castle frowned down on the peaceful scene.

Out of the town rises a long flight of stone steps mounting a hill where stands a Calvary. The steps on either side are flanked by avenues of tall dark cypress trees. One would like to see the flight on the night of Thursday in Holy Week when the *pasos* lighted by candles and twinkling oil lamps, are borne up the long flight of steps to the chapel at the summit. On either side against the wall of cypresses stand the silent, motionless figures of the *penitentes* in their long white and black robes, and tall peaked caps and masks.

We picnicked on the sands by Pollensa's bay, and later followed the sea's curve around the dark headlands. The water was a deep violet blue — with here and there startling patches of vivid green. The cliffs rose purple from the still, foamless water.

Beyond a reach of salt marshes from Pollensa lies Alcudia with the ruins of its amphitheatre. Whence the great Majorcan controversy. Historians divide into two camps — those who claim a Roman past for the grass-grown coliseum beyond the ruddy-toned Arab gateways of the town, and those who date its origin from an enterprising mayor a generation ago who wished to encourage the sport of the *corridas de toros*.

Alcudia itself was drenched with a sudden spring rain. We had fleeting glimpses through the wide spreading arches of its house doors, of stone-flagged rooms, part kitchen, part shop, part stable; with fat-bellied red water jars in the corners, and leisurely stone staircases, mounting along the rear wall to the raftered galleries.

We came back to Palma by the main road across the island. It was marked off in leagues, by stones covered with five centuries of lichens.

Inca, a somber mud-colored town in the centre of the island was once the seat of a great Majolica factory. Scaliger praised it and the vases its potters turned out.

There was a potter working in his shed just beyond the town on the road to Selva. His bare feet kept his wheel turning evenly while two small sons brought lumps of wet clay, moulded to the required size, and *el niño* tumbled about happily on the floor among the unbaked jars and water bottles.

On the ridge pole of the roof he had set up a grotesque clay figure of a man. "The Inca of Perusalem" we dubbed it, remembering G. B. S.

Up in the hills between Inca and the northern shore is the monastery of Lluch. Lluch, like Montserrat, has its miracle-working virgin which was discovered here by pious shepherds after the expulsion of the Moors.

The monastery perches high amid lonely hills. The road winds and curves around the pinnacles of rock, twice it threads the eye of a stone needle and comes out on the other side above a sharp precipice nearly one thousand feet above sea level.

Then, one's eye is transfixed by a modelling of grey rocks against the sky. They are like marching cowled figures — pressing forward in long serried ranks — scores, hundreds, of giant grey pilgrims mounting the last steep climb to the shrine of Nuestra Señora de Lluch, strange and awesome enough in the bright noonday sun, but how mysterious in the moonlight!

Like Montserrat, Lluch has its guest house for pilgrims, a long building with a raftered upper gallery that forms one end of the village outside the church. There, the pilgrim may stay for three days, but he must bring his own food. There is no charge for lodging; one leaves an offering to suit one's purse.

GLIMPSES OF SPANISH GARDENS

DOWN THE WINDING ROAD OF CULLERA

IN THE PALM GROVE OF ELCHE

But the monastery of Lluch — like that of Montserrat — has lost its greatness. Only a few brothers remain in the long, echoing corridors.

It is in its country life that Majorca exerts its most potent charm. The hillsides behind Palma are dotted with generous *quintas* bowered in olive and almond groves. Many of these belonged to Arab land holders before the Conquest.

Alfabia, perched high on the west slope of the Col du Soller was the country house of the Moor Benhabet who became an ally of Jaime and furnished food to him on his route of march. Long afterward the house sheltered the children of the unfortunte Jaime III. The entrance to the patio is through a Moorish gateway with a richly ornamented ceiling. Around it runs the inscription in Arabic:

"The Law is of God; Power is from God; Mercy is from God; God is most great; There is no other God; Wealth is from God."

The gardener met us at the courtyard gate. Without it two white goats grazed in a meadow starred with blue periwinkles. He led us through a garden of winding walks between espaliered fig trees — between which grew clumps of iris, roses and calla lilies. The path terminated in a long and lovely pergola with thirty-two octagonal stone columns. On the balustrade between the columns stood stone urns. The gardener motioned us to wait while he did something with a large turn-screw. There was a soft splashing — then from each urn spouted a thin water jet. They curved inward over the pergola walk, spraying the banks of maidenhair fern that grew between the stones.

Raixa, the ancient country house of the Despuigs, lies on the hills above Palma. We took the funny chugging little island train to Buñola and walked back along the road between the olive groves. It was a grey day with a hint of rain to follow.

At the gates we turned up the avenue to the terrace with its wide plantings of blue irises. The house is comparatively unimpressive, but the terraced gardens are among the loveliest in the world. They are built in a series of eight terraces which symbolize the eight paradises of the Koran. A long flight of marble steps, spattered with orange lichens, leads to the topmost paradise which is presided over by an antique marble god — one of those brought from the great Cardinal Despuig's villa at Albano. Below the steps stretches a wide reservoir. Tiny rivulets run through open channels to water the beds of geraniums and fuchsias and roses.

After the Conquest, Raixa fell to the lot of the Sacristan of Gerona. Long afterward, it was inherited by the Counts of Montenegro.

Here Catalina Tomás, the Blessed, sewed under the pepper tree beside the fountain in the cobblestoned patio. We sat on a worn stone bench under the pepper tree while a sudden April shower rolled up over the mountain and shadowed the valley. It was nearly time for the train to leave for Palma, and we were six kilometers from Buñola. There was no other train, and our boat from Palma to Valencia left at nine that night. The great house was shut; there was only the caretaker to relieve our plight.

Majorcan hospitality was put to the test.

A farm cart was found — it had brought a load of

charcoal from the forest. The donkey stood patiently outside the gate, while the *carbonero* refreshed himself in the porter's lodge. Sheepskins were piled on the floor of the cart, and a faded, striped blanket arranged on uprights to form a tent-like covering. The porter and his wife helped us in — they heaped our laps with freesias. The *carbonero* mounted to his seat, close to the shafts, and snapped his whip. The donkey started at a leisurely pace. So we were driven down the road between the groves of olive trees, through a silver April rain, to the trot, trot of donkey's hooves and occasionally, from the *carbonero*, a burst of Homeric laughter.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE ROAD TO MURCIA

(Valencia — Alicante — Elche — Orihuela)

IF THERE is a worst road," said the Good Sport, quoting what an exasperated chauffeur once said of us, "that's the road they want to go."

There are two routes southward from Valencia to Alicante, one by the coast through Gandia, the other inland by way of Alcoy and Jijona. We had chosen the coast road. It was a few kilometers shorter than the other and the Guide assured us that it presented no mountains to be climbed. True, this meant giving up the fun of going shopping in Jijona — pronounced Shishona — for the delectable sweetmeat compounded of honey and crushed almonds, to which the town gives its name, *turrone de Jijona;* but to compensate for this we would have the Mediterranean on our left all the way. Our eyes never tired of its blue expanse, nor of the white fishing villages and orange groves which are the color symphony of the eastern shore of Spain.

Now, as we jolted over the roughest piece of high road we had encountered so far, we wondered if we had made a wise choice.

The route lies southward across the *huerta* of Valencia toward the mountains of Alicante rising steep and

angular, and a soft sunset pink, against the horizon. Fantastic lines of violet shadows mark deep canyons that cut the range into a cubist design. One great peak has lost its hold on the others and tumbled out into the sea, leaving a ribbon of green *huerta* threaded between.

On either side of the road stretch the rice fields divided into a green and tan checkerboard by the intersecting lines of irrigating canals, with here and there whitewashed, sharply-pointed, thatched roofed houses — the *barracas* of the *huerta*. They are unlike any house anywhere else in Spain. From each gable rises a small wooden replica of the Cross of Caravaca. Through southern Valencia and Murcia, this is regarded with awe as a talisman against the diseases of cattle.

Two great brown-skinned oxen drawing a harrow over a rice field are driven by a man who wears wide, white linen trousers ending above the knees. A purple *faja* and head kerchief, dyed with the mulberry dye of the district, complete his costume. Behind him, his wife trudges along the furrow scattering seed, while the baby swings in a cradle of woven esparto grass that is slung from the heavy wooden yoke between the oxen's heads.

To our left, between the road and the sea, lie the waters of the lagoon and the Albufera. Boats move gently across its unruffled expanse, their brown and yellow lateen sails are like giant butterflies hovering above the fields. Still further to the east a line of dark green pines along the sea's edge marks the outlines of La Dehesa, the sand bar which saves the *huerta* from the greed of the Mediterranean. By an ancient *fuero*, still in force, anyone may shoot and fish there on the

days in November that are sacred to St. Martin and St. Catherine.

This is the beach that Sorolla loved to paint. He was primarily the child of the Albufera; his canvases blaze with its fierce white sunlight, its untempered yellows and blues and greens. Like Valencia's other famous son, Blasco Ibañez, he delighted in this heritage of the Moorish past.

There are villages on the *huerta*, the villages of the Albufera, with white houses and churches with blue-tiled domes, and date palms rising solemnly from their midst. Sueca, when we came to it, was built about a great stone threshing floor on which at harvest time the oxen trample out the fine rice grains. It had a church with a tall tower and a weather vane atop, a jolly weather vane of a ploughman driving his plough straight into the wind.

Beyond Sueca the *huerta* narrowed. The road verged toward the sea and threatened to run itself head foremost into the side of a towering rocky island. A ruined castle crowned one peak. On another spur of the rock stood the lonely sanctuary of the Virgin of Cullera.

The TRAVESIA sign pointed us over the bridge of the Jucar, coming out of the steep hills with memories of La Mancha.

How often one blesses the authorities not only for marking the name of each village, no matter how small, on the wall of the first house, but for indicating the thoroughfare through these mazes of narrow lanes. One cannot mistake the arrow and the bold black letters that proclaim quite simply: Thoroughfare.

Truth forces me to admit that we had been a long day on the road and had wondered several times about that

THE VIRGIN OF FUENSANTA

THE CATHEDRAL AND BELLTOWER OF MURCIA

elusive town TRAVESIA which seemed, like tomorrow, to lie always ahead and yet was never reached, before we understood its real significance.

The low meadows on either side the Jucar were spread with yellow iris. The sight of them there, and their lovely, lingering Spanish name — *lirios amarillos* — reminded us that somewhere hereabouts lay the country estate which the Leyvas granted to Gil Blas. Its name, too, was LIRIOS.

Beyond Cullera the road went from bad to worse. And to add to the discomfort, it was thronged with carts piled high with oranges, and others from which hogsheads of wine were slung in rope cradles. To meet one of these with its four — sometimes five — mules harnessed tandem coming around a sharp corner between converging walls is an experience not soon to be forgotten.

Right here we had our first and only serious encounter with the Spanish mule. Fortunately we had been forewarned by the Scotchman we met in Saguntum.

"When a carter steers his beast straight into a wall and turns its heels to you — give it a wide berth.' '

At a narrow corner an orange carter did precisely this. By good luck we remembered the warning in time to swing Ximena as far as possible to the opposite side of the road.

Out went the mule's heels with a scant two inches between them and us, and down went the beast, tangled in its traces, amid a shower of oranges and vigorous oaths, while we slid by in safety.

Gandia, when we came to it, proved a disappointing town despite its memories of the Borgias. They held among other greater honors the title of Dukes of Gandia,

and possessed with the duchy a palace in the town. Ferdinand *el Católico* bestowed it on Juan, a younger brother of Cæsar. His son, Francisco, became a saint and redeemed the family tradition.

The bad road and a half hour's wait in Gandia for a bolt to be tightened took up more time than we could afford. Regretfully, we gave up all idea of following the spur of road out to Denia on its rocky headland and having lunch there beside the sea.

Viewed from the crossroads, Denia was a blur of white houses and masts and the green and yellow funnels of a steamer anchored off the shore, and a long line of carts piled with oranges going down to the wharves. High above the seaport towered the rocky headland with its ancient fortified castle and ruins of a Greek colony dedicated long ago to Diana.

South of the town, and southeast of the highroad, rises a much greater headland, the Mongó. We had seen its seaward face from the deck of the *Manuel Arnus* as we sailed along this coast to Barcelona. Then, only the sheer cliff and the orange-hued peaks rising full two thousand feet into the air, and the peaks of other mountains crowding behind it had been visible.

Approached from the north, one saw that there was a narrow pass between the Mongó and its brother peaks, and through this pass the highroad threaded its white ribbon. The ground was rising steadily. On either side were vineyards of the raisin grapes for which the district is renowned, and olive groves.

In the midst of these stood Benisa.

We saw the town on its own hill among the olive groves with the mountains at its back, for some little while before the road wound close to it, close enough to

see its tall old church with unglazed windows through which tendrils of green ivy stretched investigating fingers, its soft brown houses, the color of the rocks, the orange and lemon trees in its tiny walled gardens. But it is not these things that make Benisa the never-to-be-forgotten high spot of that drive along the coast from Barcelona southward. Other villages that we passed had all these and more, but no other village or lonely hillside had that gigantic green amphitheatre, curving down deeper and deeper from the height on which the village stood, in terrace on terrace of olives and figs and vines; down, down, down, two hundred feet and more, until it opened on the sea and a massive orange brown rock that rose out of the waters and had only a narrow thread of sand to tie it to the shore.

I do not know Benisa's history, if it has a history. I cannot tell what great men and women it mothered, or if such greatness ever walked its streets. It is not in the guide books, and the nearest railway station is a back-breaking drive in a *tartana* away. It has no hotel, and I doubt if its *fonda* would tempt the exacting foreign tourist. But when other travellers bring out their tales of Sorrento and Corfu, and the Golden Horn, the Good Sport and I smile without envy and say when they are done: "Ah, but have you seen Benisa?"

It remains to us one of those lost, lovely places to which the mind returns again and again, and from which it comes back refreshed by its draught of pure beauty.

The mountains that ring Benisa to the west and south were cut by a deep canyon through which a river fumbled its way to the sea. The canyon was the road-maker's solution. He pinned the highway to one side

first, then, bridging the abyss to the other, letting the river guide the road in and out between the folds of the mountains. We were high above the stream and mounting steadily higher. Before us the rock wall seemed impassible, then, rounding a curve, the road plunged deep into the rock through a narrow tunnel that was stopped at the other end by the sea and a white ship sailing by. Again the road twisted, climbed, shot through a second tunnel, and we were out of the gorge, high above the Mediterranean on the south shore of the Cabo de la Nao.

It was a straight road thenceforward through Benidorm and Villajoyosa — who could be sad in such a place? — and Santa Faz, the gardened suburb of Alicante, which is the proud guardian of one of the three handkerchiefs of Saint Veronica!

It had been Spring along the Albufera that morning, but on the south side of Cabo de la Nao it was summer. Purple bougainvillea, white starred clematis, wistaria, and pink and yellow roses tumbled in an eager riot over the high white walls. Through the grilles of iron gates we caught glimpses of green gardens of palms and lemon trees and shrubberies of myrtles and hibiscus. Masses of dark blue iris carpeted the ground beneath the trees. Little blue-tiled fountains splashed softly.

Passing a pair of tall iron gates, these were flung wide and a carriage rolled out into the road ahead of us. It was a low, open victoria. Two ladies, one very fat and red and smiling, the other tall and thin and yellow, leaned against the cushions. Both wore black with *mantillas* of handsome lace set high above tortoise shell combs. On the seat facing them sat a white-haired priest with a fine shrewd face. A man of the world,

one saw, in the garb of the Church. Perhaps the family chaplain, or a brother who had followed the old tradition of Spain: "*The Church, the sea, or the King's household for him who would thrive.*"

The names of the houses were painted on the gateposts: CARMEN DE LAS FLORES, CARMEN DE LAS DELICIAS.

The Spanish tongue distinguishes exactly between the various types of country dwellings. A *Granja* is a great estate. *Hacienda* means literally a work place, a plantation house to which the owner comes on short visits from his "palace" in the town, but which is primarily for the overseer and his family. A *Quinta* is a gentleman's country place, a farm on a modest scale, though often rich and beautiful in its appointments. *Carmen* means a house set within a garden, distinguished from a *Villa* which may have no garden at all except its patio.

There is a Conradian atmosphere about Alicante. The spirit of long ago sea adventures lingers under its palms along the water front. Groups of sea folk come and go and loiter at the cafés on the opposite side of the Paseo, to buy lottery tickets and have their boots blacked — the two universal street amusements of Spain — and eat cold, boiled *langoustinas* and *grabos* purchased from the fish sellers who pass in and out among the tables whining their wares. The waters lap idly at the rotting wooden wharves. There is little business about them that one can see. Alicante has none of the important commerce that enriches the ports of Barcelona and Valencia. Naval affairs are conducted from Cartagena where the Admiralty maintains its chief station, and fashion takes the sea air at Malaga.

The boats moored under the shadows of the leaning date palms are for the most part small freighters and tramp steamers that pick up a cargo here and there where they can get it. They put in to Alicante for loads of coarse salt from the deposits at Torrevieja and Guardamar a few miles down the coast. Salt that is carried across the Atlantic to Gloucester and used to salt the slabs of raw codfish which return to *bacallao* to Spain to scent every market place and grocery. They ply back and forth between the ports of the world "with raisins in the cabin and almonds in the hold," with wines, and tiles, and ground red pepper. They are the heritors of that once proud sea glory that was Castile, whose death knell sounded in Drake's guns when King Philip's Armada went down to defeat.

There are few sights in Alicante as the tourist counts these. The orange-hued Castle of Santa Barbara, always the patroness of the Spanish artillery — which overlooks the town and harbor — is not open to visitors. But from our window we had the stars glimmering through the forest of masts across the Paseo, the twang of a guitar at a café further down the street. And while we were breakfasting, a tumbler, a crumpled little man with legs much too short for the size of his body, and a serious, wrinkled face, stopped below the balcony and turned a series of Catherine wheels and somersaults while his wife stood by and shook a tambourine suggestively.

Also, we found Pedro.

Or, he was found for us.

From some English travellers we had heard tales of the road between Murcia and Granada. A lonely, desolate mountain region, so they described it, with

few towns and none of these of sufficient importance to possess a hotel. A *fonda* was the best we could hope for; failing that, a *posada* with Ximena lodged with the carters' mules in the courtyard. They had come over that road six weeks before; they spoke of it in terms that verged on the dramatic, of fords to be crossed and mountains to be climbed, of treacherous mists that drooped down from the snow-clad Sierra Nevadas and hid the road from a foot before the car's radiator. For a part of the way, the woman of the party had stood on the running board to gauge the distance between the wheels and the edge of the precipice.

For two women . . . alone . . . in a *coche* Ford . . .

What a familiar sound that had!

"Suppose we have a puncture. Suppose the gasoline gives out. Suppose something goes wrong with Ximena's engine that you can't fix. Suppose we get stuck in a river and there are no mules to pull us out . . ."

In view of these possible contingencies, it was decided that we should go shopping in Alicante for a temporary chauffeur to make the trip with us as far as Granada.

Thus, Pedro Carrillo, aged nineteen, but with a wife and a baby in the Calle del Cid, and a *coche* Ford of his own that might have been the twin sister to our Ximena.

He surveyed us out of sullen black eyes as we packed the luggage into as small a space as possible to make room for the Good Sport on the back seat. We had added to our collection four more drinking bottles discovered in Alicante that morning — a fisherman's bottle of blown glass, in color an enchanting sea green; and three clay chickens, with topknots and wings and

tail feathers painted gay green and red. The chickens were products of a local potter and as typical of Alicante as the Greek vases of Majorca.

At sight of them, Pedro's lip curled disdainfully. Who said anything about gypsies?

The twenty-three kilometers between Alicante and Elche are etched across my memory only as a dusty ribbon over barren plains with nothing to make them memorable save the first view of the palm grove of Elche.

The palms of Elche . . . "ten thousand saw I at a glance," lifting proud heads against the sky, row upon row of date palms with square, flat-roofed white houses set about under them, a bit of Africa moved across the straits. There was a town of Elche before the Moors discovered it. It has the proud distinction of having defeated the almost undefeatable Hannibal. Fragments of Greek and early Iberian sculpture have been discovered round hereabouts, though none so lovely as the remote and faintly smiling, marble Lady of Elche in the Louvre.

The Almohades diverted the course of the Vinalapó into a maze of irrigating ditches along which they planted date palms not in scores, as in their other settlements, nor in hundreds, but in hundreds of thousands.

One walks through the cool, shadowy colonnades where water trickles in little runnels beside the paths, and freesias — pink and white and creamy yellow, make the air sweet. It is the living, green embodiment of the great mosque at Cordova.

Early in May the male palms blossom. The pollen

is sprinkled by hand over the female palms which bear their crop — about seventy-five pounds of dates, every second year. All of these are consumed locally. We saw some golden yellow fruits hanging on their own stems in the market and were told they came from the famous grove. But though there was a sentimental flavor in eating the fruit of the tree on the spot where it grows, that proved nearly all the flavor it possessed.

The groves' other crop was being gathered — hundreds of bundles of bleached palm leaves destined soon to figure in the Palm Sunday processions. The tree tops from which they were cut were bound up until they looked like gigantic mops with handles stuck into the ground. They had suffered this indignity for months while the leaves bleached to the desired blondness. In every town we had passed, we had seen dusty remnants of last year's *Domingo de Ramilletes*, fastened to balconies and over door lintels to ward off lightning. On many house fronts, beside the palm branch, the metal seal of a fire insurance company is affixed to the wall, token that the householder carries insurance in two worlds — spiritual and temporal.

The country round about Elche is the hottest spot in Europe. Verdureless hills rise abruptly from the arid plain — yellow and brown and rosy red hills, marked with the crumbling walls of the castles of old Moorish lords. Along the steep river banks, where the waters seem to dig themselves in deeper and deeper to avoid the sun, grow thickets of furious cacti and aloes and prickly pears. The villages of flat-roofed adobe huts have the sullen air of villages in which everything happens behind closed doors. Even the churches, elsewhere self-assertive, seem furtive and abashed.

The people are burned to African blackness by the relentless sun. The men sitting at the cafés in the charming arcaded market place of Elche were like actors out of their roles — those dark, unsmiling faces should have been crowned with turbans, and the lean, hard bodies wrapped in white burnooses. In one corner of the square a cock fight was in progress — two feathered epitomes of rage spinning in a whirlwind of dust, and all around that whirlwind a circle of crouching figures, with dark, intent faces — silent, wary, absorbed.

From a balcony above their heads, two women looked down. One wore a mustard yellow blouse and had a pink geranium in her hair.

Our way led away from the oasis further into the desert, under the lee of a sharp-toothed mountain ridge, on which the only patches of green were cactus and giant aloes whose tall stalks shot out from the mountain side twelve or fifteen feet. One, more urgent than the rest, had burst like a rocket into scarlet bloom. Herds of black goats wandered on the bare slopes. Their bells tinkled mournfully above us.

We had left the happy-go-lucky, pleasant, smiling Spain behind us with the sea, and the friendly white villages, and the orange and lemon groves. This Spain was sullen, and hard, and pitiless, and indifferent; a fatalistic Spain, nurtured on the Koran and its own bitter stones and cacti and brown desert.

It would seem as though the entire population of these desert villages were engaged in the manufacture of *alpargatas*. Beside the doors squatted men, women and children supplying the footwear of Castile and Aragon, Murcia and Andalusia. The men make the

soles of twisted hemp, pulling the strands taut about pegs in a wooden board propped against their knees, the *chicos* moisten and twist the hemp to the weavers' hands, while the women and girls cut and sew the canvas tops. A pair of the best costs three and a half pesetas, and its life is about two months.

The hemp of which the soles are made grows in the rich river bottom of the Segura winding out into the desert from the *huerta* of Murcia. The Segura is one Spanish river which never fails the fields that wait on its coming. "*Llueva ó no llueva, trigo a Orihuela,*"* as the saying goes.

Orihuela itself lies squeezed between its bleak sierra and the green river meadows. Churches and towers and square, flat-roofed houses were a deep chrome yellow, engirdled by remnants of rosy red wall that was Roman first, then Gothic and later Moorish.

When the Arabs swept across Andalusia, King Theodomir retreated within these walls and ordered the women to disguise themselves as men to defend the town. They tied their long hair across their chins and let it fall over their breasts like the most manly beards. The Arab chief, Abdulaziz, seeing the place defended by so many stalwart men-at-arms offered a truce, and, when the ruse was explained to him, his admiring congratulations.

Orihuela marks the boundary limit of the Catalan tongue. Before Orihuela it is, and after Orihuela it is not.

South of Barcelona, the language begins to lose its integrity. At Valencia there are still two tongues, *castellano* and *valenciano* — which is Catalan mixed

* "Rain or no rain, there is wheat in Orihuela."

with Moorish words and inflections. At Alicante, the second language — *alicantino* — for still there are two, has sunk to a patois. At Orihuela it ends. There and westward, there is but one tongue, the *lengua castellana*. It may be spoken with the slurring southern accent which makes it difficult to those whose Spanish is the *lengua castellana* of Madrid, but the difference is one of inflection only, not the presence of a second tongue. What has made this change so absolute at Orihuela? Our informant did not know, except, as seems probable, it is the influence of the seminary on the mountain behind the town.

"A very religious town," said Pedro in respectful accents.

Certainly, it has a multiplicity of churches great and small, and none of them particularly interesting. Over the door of the pompous cathedral we made out the inscription, ES DE REFUGIO, which marks it as one of the "refuge churches" in which criminals might find sanctuary.

The façade was plastered over with posters. Most of these announced special services during the approaching Holy Week, but one, more insistent than the others, was directed to feminine eyes and consciences, and spoke in warning tones of the sin of skirts too short and neck lines too low.

"GOD IS NOT OPPOSED TO STYLE," it concluded, "ONLY IMMODESTY."

There came a sudden shower that spattered smartly on Ximena's roof. A stout priest walking ahead of us picked up the trailing skirts of his soutane and hurried at a pace for which his girth had long ago unfitted him. Then a woman came from a side lane carrying an um-

MURCIA — ON A MARKET DAY

A GARDEN ALONG THE MALECON — MURCIA

THE MILKMAN OF BAZA

brella. She held it generously over *el padre* who stopped his panting and lighted a *cigarrillo* in grateful ease. Side by side, under the companionate umbrella they proceeded up the street at a pace more Spanish.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A NIGHT AND A DAY ON THE GYPSY TRAIL

MURCIA'S Patrona is the Virgin of Fuensanta. For all but a few weeks of the year, her image is housed in the mountain shrine high on the sierra which guards the *huerta* from the south. There pious folk may go on pilgrimages and drink the waters of the holy well — *fuente santa*, that bubbles within the church.

It is not a rich and famous shrine like that of Nuestra Señora de Montserrat, or the mountain-ringed sanctuary of Guadalupe, to which thousands of pilgrims go each year. The Virgin of Fuensanta is Murcia's own. Her fame does not reach beyond the desert hills that enfold the green little kingdom. Her care is for the orchards and the fields, her blessings for the labors of the husbandman.

Twice or three times in the year — at the time of the Spring sowing, when the young blades have sprouted, and once again when the fruits hang heavy on the boughs, a delegation waits upon his lordship, the Bishop of Murcia. They petition him to send up to the mountain shrine and bring down the *sagrada imagen* to be placed above the high altar of the cathedral where the people of the *huerta* may ask her intercession for saving showers.

From the cathedral, which lies at the heart of the old city, the procession sets forth, across the bridge over the Segura which has on its bridge head a shrine of the Patrona before which there are flowers by day and burning lamps by night; through the newer quarter of the town, and so by the winding lanes of the *huerta* to the mountain shrine.

When the procession returns, the little, satin-robed image is carried proudly in the lead. A blare of trumpets and the smoke of the swinging censers fills the green lanes between the hedgerows. The peasants working in the fields drop their rakes and hoes to join the cortège. Troops from the garrison line the bridge on either side. There are more trumpeters, a swell of many voices, as the serene figure in the stiff robes of white and gold brocade, the sun flashing from her golden crown and the silver moon beneath her feet, is borne past the kneeling crowds, in at the west door of the cathedral which is opened only for great occasions such as this, and placed reverently in the flower-wreathed niche above the altar.

Such a procession had taken place a fortnight before our arrival. The Patrona stood in her niche above the altar smiling down upon her people of the *huerta* from a blaze of lighted candles and a bower of white blossoms.

And, meanwhile, it rained!

It had been raining, they told us, off and on in copious showers for a week. We drove into the city through a veritable corkscrew of streets that wound deeper and deeper into the heart of the old town. A feeble sun shone on the damp and muddy walls. As we followed the porter up the stairs and along the ruddy-tiled inside

corridors that had along their walls one or two fine carved chests, and chairs with heavy leather saddle seats, and a tall armoire of Spanish walnut, the heavens opened and the rain began anew. The plaza before the hotel, which had been filled with tables and coffee drinkers, became a morass of mud. The charlatan who had been selling patent neckties from the tail of a cart gathered up his stock and his vocabulary and fled. A potter riding by on his donkey, wedged securely between the red *cántharos*, put up his umbrella, and our chambermaid, flinging wide the windows, surveyed the downpour with beaming satisfaction.

"*Tiempo lluvioso*," said she proudly, quite as though she herself were responsible for it.

And *tiempo lluvioso* it remained for the afternoon and the night, and the morning that were our stay in Murcia.

The same "wild men of Castile" who guard the cathedral portal at Avila, and appear in the carvings at Segovia, ornament the outer wall of the cathedral chapel which contains the heart of the Alfonso *el sabio* who, it would seem, had more than a philosopher's interest in Moorish customs. It is recorded that he sent an emissary to the Sultan of Egypt to ask the hand of his daughter. The Sultan, whether in reproof or by way of greater honor is not recorded, sent him a crocodile instead! Could the Sultan have been indulging in a delicate joke at the expense of Castile? "Crocodile" is Spanish slang for a false lover. One may see the stuffed and dusty skin hanging above a side door of the cathedral in Seville. The Door of the Lizard, the *sevillanos* call it, in reference to *el sabio's* "bride."

Murcia's cathedral has suffered many architectural

vicissitudes from its thirteenth century Gothic origin to its magnificent rococco west front.

"If you like that sort of thing, it's the best in Spain," said the Boston architect we met later.

Whether one likes "that sort of thing" or not, the ornate recessed façade with its single tower is completely satisfying, and wholly Spanish. In color, it is a warm sun-baked cream; an opulent mother church, not wistful and yearning and mystic and ascetic like the grey Gothic shrines of the north, but filled with the brooding, fructifying spirit of the *huerta.*

The Patrona enthroned in a bower of blossoms and lighted candles above the High Altar seemed out of character. One felt that she should have been a deep bosomed goddess, maternal and Junoesque.

But the neatly pretty face which looks out from the elaborate silver gilt ruff is quite expressionless, almost bored. She has not even a glance for the Child balanced insecurely on her left arm. Beneath her feet glitters a silver crescent moon, tipped with two stars. This representation of the "woman clothed with the sun and with the moon under her feet" is typical of Southern Spain where the crescent has more than a poetic significance. It is the interpretation which Murillo, true son of Andalusia, immortalized in his Immaculate Conceptions.

Zarcillo's famous Holy Week *pasos*, the treasure and price of Murcia, are not housed in the cathedral, but in the Ermita de Jesus, a church built especially for their keeping. A sleepy-eyed youth answered our ring at what appeared to be a house door and let us in. Whether his status was lay or clerical, we were undecided, for he wore a clerical collar attached to a pink

and white striped shirt, no coat, black trousers and white *alpargatas*. Against the chair where he had been sitting leaned a guitar. He looked at it wistfully.

We asked him to play for us, expressing our preference for *el flamenco*. Quite solemnly he took up the guitar, seated himself, and crouching over the instrument like a giant bullfrog, began a *jota*. The primitive rhythm seemed to afford him intense pleasure. His eyes gleamed, his *alpargatas* tapped the floor in time to his flying fingers, and as he brought the measure to a climactic finale, he threw back his head and indulged in several self-approving: "*Olés, Olés!*"

We applauded enthusiastically, and he took the plaudits with a solemn bow. Then, reverting to the character indicated by his collar, he unlocked the doors of the various bays in which the *pasos* are kept throughout the year. They are by reputation the finest in Spain.

To our eyes, the result was in some instances too perfect, too realistic to be endured. From the bloody agony of The Scourging we turned away in the sickness of horror. Can Spain, used as she is to religious realism, look on these figures year after year and still pursue the even tenor of her way unchanged? But the Spanish love of the macabre remains a mystery. We remembered a *Pieta* in the dark aisle of Tarragona's cathedral from which we fled in horror.

The finest of all is that which represents Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, being comforted by an angel. When that *paso* is carried through the streets on the night of Thursday in Holy Week, a magnificent green palm tree is arranged to shelter the two chief figures. When the *paso* of the Last Supper is borne through the

streets on the night of Thursday in Holy Week, the table is heaped with the finest fruits, vegetables and flowers of the *huerta*. The largest oranges, the first ripened strawberries, and apricots, and *nísperos*, the finest asparagus, onions, carrots and radishes, all scrubbed and polished until they glow in the candle-light like jewels, are spread upon that board. So does the *huerta* express its devotion.

But even the *semana santa* is not unmixed with play, as was revealed in the poster which hung in the patio of our hotel. The decoration showed a handsome woman in a vivid green dress and flowing white *mantilla*. Behind her was the facade of the Cathedral and a distant Calvary, while underneath one read the glowing promise:

GRANDES FIESTAS DE SEMANA SANTA Y PRIMAVERA

Solemn Processions . Battle of Flowers .. Bull Fights
Dance ..... Concerts ..... Illuminations
Literary Festival ... and ..... Popular Celebrations.

There is a tradition that the women of Murcia are the most beautiful in Spain. We cast appraising eyes at each one we met about the streets, but alas! we saw not one who seemed to us worthy to occasion such a reputation. All the faces, both men's and women's, were decidedly Moorish, doubtless a heritage from the hundred Morisco maidens who begged off from Philip III's order of eviction on condition that they marry the aged Christian widowers of Murcia.

We drove out of Murcia in a rain that smelled of orange blossoms. The orchard boughs hung heavy with

moisture. In another five days, if the good rain held, the Virgin of Fuensanta would be restored to her mountain shrine. City and countryside would give itself over to the celebration of Holy Week, confident that a good harvest was secure.

The road to Lorca led westward across the *huerta* between the blossoming hedgerows. We passed bullocks drawing heavy loads. Their foreheads were surmounted by exotic headdresses ten inches high embroidered in colored wools. Later in the season they would be drawing loads of red peppers to the mills at Murcia to be ground into the powder without a dash of which no Spanish dish comes to the table. Nowhere else in the peninsula does the pepper plant flourish. Experiments have been tried taking soil from the *huerta* to other provinces, but without success. The Spanish red pepper is Murcia's own.

At the doors of the white-washed cottages, wherever a sunbeam fell athwart a wall, we noticed bed springs propped up on chairs and carefully covered with blankets and rags and bits of sacking. These housed the newly-hatched silk worms.

The Murcian peasant farmer earns enough money from his silk worms each year to pay his land rent. All that the orchards and fields produce beyond this is profit. We had noticed that each grove of trees was bordered by a row of mulberries. Now the reason was clear.

The care of the young worms and the cocoons is given over to the old people and children who cannot work in the market gardens. It is a quick harvest and a sure one. Six weeks of feeding and watching, and following the sun, and there is the good silver for the landlord.

This silk is not woven into fabrics, but used to make catgut and surgical sutures.

The barren mountains were drawing closer as we approached the western gate of the garden land of Murcia. The ruin of a brown-walled Moorish castle crowned the height. This had guarded the kingdom against the Cid who ranged this country round about before he turned his energies against Valencia. Somewhere through the mountain passes to the north, the Douglas had ridden to join the hosts of Castile, and by one of the myriad donkey trails that traverse the hills the Scotchman had passed before us on his sentimental journey on the Douglas' trail.

Near Totana we passed close under a hill that was pitted with cave dwellings. The tall clay chimmeys rose three and four feet out of the top of the bank like a new kind of aloe. Beside the village fountain a gypsy mule clipper was plying his long sharp scissors, surrounded by a group of admiring small boys. All the mules and donkeys we saw had their backs and flanks clipped in geometric designs of great intricacy. It is still the fashion in Andalusia for wealthy landowners to drive behind a pair of handsome mules. Often these animals — more valuable than horses — have the armorial bearings of their owners clipped upon their flanks.

Totana was for years the *gitano* capital of Murcia. Thousands of the Black People live in the hillsides round about.

Lorca, when we came into it, was a brown town — brown walls, red brown roofs, and a deep brown ravine through which a river coursed muddily between banks of cactus and prickly pear. It had a savage aspect.

The square red towers and walls of the Arab fortress frowned down upon the new town — new since 1234 — from the Golden Mountain.

At the fountain beside the bridge, women were filling red brown *amphoras* and bearing them away, balanced beautifully against their hips. They stopped and stared at us as we drew up beside the incongruous, red-painted gasoline station. Then, with a chorus of cries, they left their jars on the fountain curb and crowded about us. That crowd at Lorca — there had been other crowds in other places, but none to equal this in numbers or vivid chattering interest. Eighty dark palms were held out for alms; forty dark faces peered at us and Ximena and the luggage with unashamed curiosity; forty voices were raised to call upon the Virgin and the saints and all absent members of the family to see two strange women — "*inglés* as . . . and the *muchacho*, arrived in a foreign *coche* Ford with bundles . . . *Hombre!* what bundles, and how many! They were buying *gasolina* from the red pump station of Fernán Alvarez . . . thirty litres they were buying . . . *Madre mía!* they must be going a long way . . . And where had they come from? . . . and why? There was an old one . . . and a young one . . . and they wore on their heads hats . . . *hats* . . . HATS . . . *sombreros*, of a strangeness. Come quickly, Carmelita, bring the baby and the old one who though he cannot see, can still touch and feel . . . Come, and see *que pasa* in the street by the fountain . . ."

They were not unfriendly — on the contrary. The faces grinned broadly as the comments went round, frank outspoken comments on our features, our clothes, our manner, our probable ages, relationships, estates

and stations. And the inevitable questions — Were we married? Where were our husbands? Our children? Did we have something to sell? Where were we going?

They fastened on Pedro, who stood disdainfully on the curb and spat untranslatable rejoinders. A dozen hands pulled at his blue workingman's jacket. Fifty voices begged, implored, adjured him to tell what he knew of us and our ways; above all, the significance of the device on Ximena's radiator.

The change came at last, and was counted into my palm; the tally of silver and coppers recited the while by a host of interested onlookers. We were free to go, and we went. Never was I so thankful to feel Ximena start under my hand. With one finger on the horn and the other on the gas lever, we shot through that gesticulating horde, scattering the curious to right and left, down the street and over the bridge past a brown villa bowered in wisteria and yellow roses that overlooked a tangle of garden and a long, moss-walled water tank.

It was the experience at Lorca that broke the ice between Pedro and us. Until Lorca he had held himself sternly aloof, claiming no share in our adventure, of which, obviously, he disapproved. He had received our enthusiastic comments on gardens and vistas of patios and the silhouette of villages against the sky with a curl of the lip. Certainly, we were mad, quite mad.

But with that press and surge of alien voices, those shrill demands and outspoken comments on himself and us, he was forced to declare himself. It was a case of with Lorca, or with us.

"*Gusta Lorca, Pedro?*" said the Good Sport innocently enough as we exchanged the last straggling houses of it for the wide *campo*.

He shot her a furious glance.
"*Muy animales!*" was his only comment.

We had left the rain behind us in the *huerta*. Now we were running over a dry, dusty road through an empty land. It was a sunless day with a premonition of chill to follow.

At the cross roads of Puerto Lumbreras, an ancient stone bridge led westward over the winding Nogalte. This was the scene of terrific fighting during the siege of Granada, when the paltry Nogalte ran red with the mingled blood of Moors and Christians. Lope de Vega made it the scene of his great war drama "*El Primer Fajardo.*"

Our road bore off to the right and began to mount rolling downs. Then the wind came. It bore down upon us, playfully at first, in little running spurts, that increased momently in vigor. The road, curving without cease along the ridge gave us the bluster first on the left and then on the right. And it was biting cold. The carters drew their black and white checked shawls over their heads, and walked with their tightly wrapped bodies bent against the blast.

The idea of a picnic lunch in the teeth of that gale was unthinkable. Finally, it was Pedro who offered the solution. Mounting one of the many rises in the downs, we saw ahead of us the bare white cottage of the roadmaker in charge of that section of highway. These houses stand at intervals of ten or twelve kilometers along the highroads of Spain, the distance from them to the next town, painted boldly upon their walls. Here lives the roadmaker and his family, and in the dooryard usually, loiter the omnipresent Guardia Civiles.

No guards were loitering there that day when we drove up. The door and tiny windows were fast barred against the gale. Pedro went ahead and reconnoitered. In a few minutes he came back with the promise that we could eat our luncheon indoors by the roadmaker's fire.

It was only a very little fire of twigs and dried sage and rosemary, but it filled the bare, whitewashed room with incense. We spread our bread and cheese and cold meat and fruit on a stool before its grateful warmth, and held out numbed hands to the blaze while the roadmaker's wife sat at the window and sewed. Hers was a gentle dignity that would have graced a palace. She had a grave and lovely face, with the listening look that the old masters loved to paint in the eyes of figures surrounding the saints.

The house had two rooms. In one the family slept; the other, where we lunched, was kitchen and living room combined. All the cooking had to be done on the open hearth. Beside it two shelves cut deep into the stone wall held three or four clay pots and bowls, a spoon and a fork carved out of cow's horn, and an iron stirring spoon with a fantastic curved and twisted handle. This and the iron fire tongs that were fashioned like a pair of scissors with generous loops for one's fingers, were *gitano* products, made by gypsy tinkers, and traded throughout the countryside. The stool, three or four low chairs, and a tumbled hassock on which sat a little girl of about six, her head tied up in a checked handkerchief, completed the furnishings.

We invited the woman to share our meal, but she declined. The child, too, shook her head, though not without a first pleading glance at her mother. Only

when we found some little sweet cakes in the bottom of the basket and interceded on her behalf, was permission given. She drew her ragged hassock close to my knee, and shared our food as shyly as some little wild creature of the hedgerows, ready to take fright and scurry away at a sudden movement.

Quite delicately, and carefully not looking at us, the woman began to put the usual questions to Pedro. He replied between mouthfuls and with mounting self-importance, that we were two foreign pilgrims — *inglesas* — on our way to Seville for Holy Week, whom he, Pedro Carrillo of Alicante, was pledged to *el Señor Consul Norteaméricano* on his honor to protect and ensure a safe passage across the gypsy country. He showed us off with a gesture.

When we were warmed and ready to go the woman came with us to the door and held it against the fierce bluster of the gale while we passed before her over the threshold. She made over our heads the sign of the Cross.

"*Buen viaje*," she said, and added the parting salutation of the South: "*Veya con Dios*." (Go with God.)

The wind stayed with us all that afternoon into Velez Rubio, a market town that on any day less inclement would have tempted us to linger and explore its winding lanes. Its twin sister Velez Blanco perched on the heights. Rose Red and Snow White!

The red sister had an inn with an impressive sculptured façade more like that of a palace than a village *fonda*. The Duke of Alva built it; the same great gentleman who took his *moustachios* to the money lender, and raised enough on one of them to cut a dashing figure at court.

Down one of the village streets moved a procession, a priest in black and gold vestments at the head of a line of small girls in flowing white veils that were tossed by the wind like a swarm of butterflies.

Beyond Velez Rubio, the road turned westward again, running for unbroken leagues across a narrow plain that had a dark mountain ridge on either side. It was ominously empty of carts. This is marked on the old maps as the League of the Monk, though the distance to Chirivel is nearer three leagues than one. It has its name from a formidable rock mass which local imagination likens to the figure of a gigantic cowled friar. A second, smaller rock nearby is known as the Nun.

The plain on either side of the road was barren of vegetation save tufts of sage and rosemary, and now and then a gorse bush in faithful yellow flower. The Good Sport huddled down beside the luggage using it for a wind break, thus, like a good traveller turning an uncomfortable necessity into an advantage; Pedro retired into the depths of his muffler . . . he had the seaman's scorn for a coat . . . and we drove on, too chilled and cheerless for speech.

Once, on a turn of the road, we passed a solitary shawled figure sitting sideways on a donkey, and belabouring the poor beast about the haunches with a stick. Above the edge of the shawl, two sharp black eyes peered at us, and above the eyes stretched a tall crowned, wide, straight brimmed Andalusian hat.

"*Un gitano*," said Pedro laconically.

The wind had brought great rolling dark clouds from behind the mountains to the north, and these settled down into the valley. It began to rain. I took a

surreptitious look at the Michelin Guide whose directions about the route added a footnote: TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THAT THIS ROAD IS IMPASSIBLE IN TIME OF RAINS. Then and there I decided that we would put up for the night in the first village along the way that presented even a *posada*.

The first village proved to be Chirivel. Its doors were shut tight against the driving rain. We leaned out into the downpour, and questioned an old man hobbling along the sodden road in tattered *alpargatas* through which bare heels and toes protruded. Was there a *fonda* in Chirivel?

We might have been asking for the moon, so amazed did he appear. He shook his head. A *posada* then? No, not even a *posada*. Chirivel was a poor place, few travellers passed that way, and those that did put up along the road.

We went on. There was nothing else to do. The rain and the wind's buffetings increased; Ximena's tires slid and slithered in the mud which splashed up from her wheels on either side until step and doors and top were plentifully bespattered.

Contador . . . a line of mud colored houses fronting on the high road. Again I put the question: Was there a *posada?*

A shake of the head. We went on.

The road had been rising steadily all the way out of Velez Rubio, the plain growing higher as we neared the Sierra Nevadas. Once when the clouds lifted for a moment, we saw to the southwest a far, snow crowned peak, the Pico de Mulhacen that looks on Granada. Then, the clouds drew sullenly together again. Rain, and more rain, and more rain. And no one, it seemed, travelling that road but us.

Then, of a sudden, we came to the edge of the plain. Below us on both sides the ground dropped away without warning — down, down, a hundred feet and more to a meandering river with lush, green meadows on either side. The road dropped, too; it swung sharply to one side of the bank, then doubled on itself in a series of hairpin curves. Along that bank, dug into the face of the down were cave dwellings, each with a wooden door painted bright blue or red or green or white. The doors opened on a narrow ribbon of donkey trail that twined back and forth up the face of the bank. From the top of the down clay chimneys poured out the smoke of a thousand gypsy fires which curled into the rain and mist.

We had come on one of the *gitano* settlements that dot Andalusia. When Gustav Doré visited Cullar de Baza half a century before us, the settlement numbered above five thousand.

The Spanish gypsies no longer roam like their brethren of England and the Balkans. When they came over the Pyrenees, driven out of France sometime in the fifteenth century, it was their migratory habits that most disturbed the rulers of Castile. Laws were passed forbidding them to wander the roads. Ferdinand and Isabella's Hermandad was organized to enforce these, and to protect travellers against the *Egyptianos* who, according to Cervantes, "were born only to steal." There were other charges, too, laid against them, not excepting that of cannibalism. There was a certain maiden stolen from a village in this very neighborhood close to Guadix, who is reputed to have furnished the chief interest at a gypsy banquet. Even Borrow did not disprove the charge.

But aside from forbidding them to wander, or to settle in towns of less than one thousand hearths (to which they paid no heed), or to work as blacksmiths, which trade they have completely preëmpted, Spain suffered the *gitanos* much as the Egyptians had long ago suffered the ten plagues. They didn't like them, but God had sent them, and the ways of God are not always understandable. They even made up a poetic little story to account for their coming — that they were Egyptians cast out from their homes and forced to wander up and down the earth because they had refused shelter to Mary and the Christ Child on their flight into Egypt.

The *gitanos* were pleased with the story and promptly took it for their own. Long ago they had lost all memory of the banks of the Indus where philologists make them start. Egypt did as well as any other land.

No one knows exactly how many gypsies there are in Spain today. Fifty thousand seems a conservative estimate. Their life is distinctly their own. They come into the towns on market days to fairs and fiestas, with a few poor fruits or vegetables or hens to sell. But these are only an excuse and not to be taken seriously. Their real object and art is beggary. They sight the stranger from afar, and come down upon him. They flatter with glance and word; they wheedle and importune; they fasten upon one's body and spirit until one gives wildly, desperately, ready to do anything to be rid of them. But, and this marks the *gitana* beggar from her Spanish colleague . . . whatever one gives, it is never enough. The pleadings give way to remonstrances, imprecations, until it would seem that the cure was worse than the disease. Then, of a sudden,

AN ANDALUSIAN GITANO — GUADIX

AN ORANGE SELLER IN LORCA

AN OLD HOUSE IN THE ALBAICÍN — GRANADA

A GYPSY DANCE — GRANADA

with a shrugging acceptance of fate, the *gitana* pockets the coin, and with a swirl of her bell skirts is off. She wears a satisfied smile before she has gone a yard, and until the next victim is marked down.

We made the long difficult descent below one row of dwellings and above another, sniffing the smell of the curling wood smoke, and thought of rabbit stew and "oat cakes, baked in the embers," of Mr. Petullengro and Isobel Berners. These were their Zincali brethren.

There were more cave dwellings atop the hill on the opposite shore of the river; the blue doors dotted the high bank. They opened as we passed, and families tumbled out into the roadway . . . lean, swarthy, aquiline faces under pink and magenta head kerchiefs, bare brown feet twinkling beneath the swirl and billow of many-colored skirts, naked brown babies, and horrible old crones, wrinkled and furrowed and grizzled.

From the top of the down we could see Baza lying curled about the base of a great conical hill. And Baza meant shelter from the wind and the rain; it meant beds and a hot supper, and a respite from the road . . . all, in fact, that an inn at the end of the day can mean to three wayfarers.

The Good Sport sat up and straightened the mound of luggage at her side. Pedro emerged from his muffler and lighted another *cigarrillo*, Ximena quickened her pace, and we drove into Baza with an air of happy nonchalance.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE ADVENTURE OF THE CAT AND THE CAMELIA

(A perfectly inconsequential chapter which concerns a night at Baza)

FTER miles of uphill and down, of mud and rain and wind and biting cold that searched out the tenderest portions of one's anatomy with a sadistic cunningness . . . the *fonda* at last. We drew up before its expressionless white front. From an upper window a woman leaned out inquiringly . . . the *padrona*.

Might we stay the night? There were three of us.

"Three?" She surveyed us a moment, considered. "Yes, there is room. A fine room with two beds for the *señoras*, and the *muchacho* . . ." She measured Pedro's young leanness with a careful eye, "the *muchacho* could share a *matrimonio* with the traveller in oils."

The shutter slammed.

A moment later she appeared at the inn door, a square, dark-browed woman, as wide as she was high, and no higher then my shoulder. She was like a strong little mountain pony as she swung the heaviest bag on her back, caught up two hat boxes in the other hand, trotted before us into the red-tiled hall with its opposing rows of splint-bottom chairs.

As she went, she talked!

"Yes, the inn was full. Many people were travelling, *verdad*. By the afternoon train had arrived three commercial travellers . . . one of them a German. Were we, by the grace of God, German too?"

Gently, we disabused her.

"Ah, well," she accepted the facts of race with a shrug. "Everyone was as God made him. There were Germans and Italians and Portugese . . . they were the worst . . . and Americans."

This, as we knew from experience meant South Americans. One must specify that one is *Norteamérícano*, or accept the blanket *inglés*.

"Once she had staying in her inn a Russian. *Madre mía*, what a man! So big!" She set down the heaviest hat box with a thud to allow the hand that had held it to describe an arc that embraced the width of the passage. "And with a beard. Such a beard! The girls had not done talking of it for a month!"

The hat box went down once more while she drew a key from her pocket and unlocked a low door set slantwise in the passage wall, pushed it open with her foot, and shoved the luggage across the threshold. Over her shoulder we looked into a bare, clean, little room with walls washed blue, two beds, a wash hand stand, and a single uncompromising chair. There was a window that gave directly on a green bank, and a sound of waters running swiftly close under the walls.

(This, we discovered later, was a brook that traversed the village and provided Baza with a convenient solution of the problem of sewage disposal.)

The *padrona* stood still in the aperture, filling it, still lost in recollections of the magnificence of the beard of the vanished Russian. We waited for ad-

mittance, clutching to us various odd bundles, baskets, books, maps, the typewriter, and the three clay chickens of Alicante.

She came back to us with a start. "Were we married?"

The inevitable question!

"*Que lástima!* Marriage was good. It gave a woman plenty of work, *verdad*, but that was something to think of beside her prayers. And there were children." Her broad face blossomed into a smile that caused dimples and creases and folds to appear all over its high colored expanse. "*Aie*, children! She had three. Two *chicas* and *el niño*. A fine baby, that last one! So big! So fat! So intelligent! A man already, one would say, though not yet two months old."

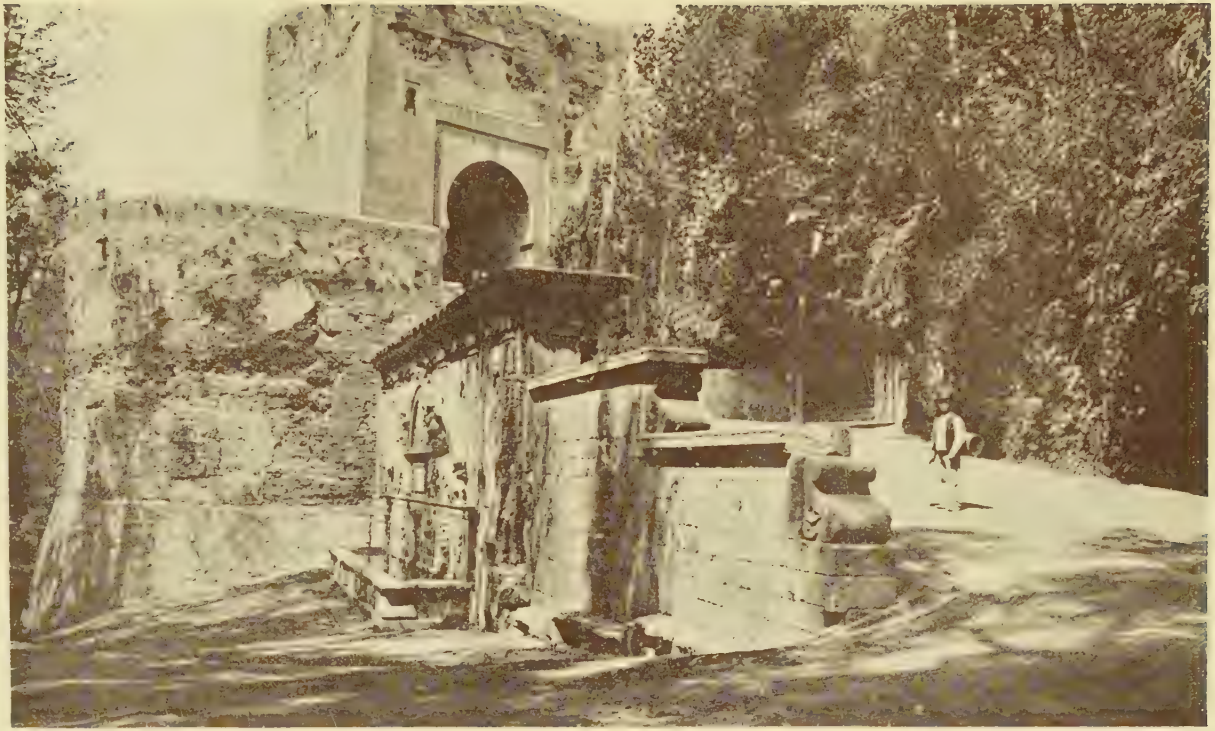
We murmured congratulations.

"Yes, marriage was good, and children were good, and business, that was good, too. The inn was full. By the afternoon train had arrived three *commercios*, one of whom was a German. Did we wish hot water?"

We did. Undoubtedly.

"*Muy bien.* We might now go in and rest ourselves, and in a moment would arrive the *muchacha* . . ."

She withdrew her bulk from the doorway, and we went in, gratefully. The room, simple as it was, presented a haven of refuge after the jolting discomforts of the road. True, the luggage took up most of the available floor space; there was nowhere to sit except on the beds for the chickens occupied the chair to the exclusion of all else. Nor was there any place to hang our coats and extra wraps, had the temperature of the inn lured us into removing these. It did not, at any time during our stay, however, so that lack was not serious.



THE GATE OF JUDGMENT — ENTRANCE TO THE ALHAMBRA

THE SECRET PATIO OF THE CYPRESS TREES — ALHAMBRA

THE GARDEN OF LINDARAXA IN THE ALHAMBRA

But it was a room. It had four walls and a ceiling. The wind and the rain could not enter, and one need not think about the next kilometer ahead until morning.

The door burst open. Its lock hung to the jamb by a single screw that made it little more than an ornament except when the key was turned. As this could be done only from the outside, the Good Sport and I were faced with the problem of deciding which of us should lock the other in, then go around to the back garden and crawl across the brook through the window.

After measuring the distance from the bank to the sill, we decided that this presented too many difficulties. We would dispense with locks and trust to the proverbial honesty of Spain to a guest under its roof, with a chair under the knob when we went to sleep.

Wherefore . . . much that follows.

The interruption was the *muchacha* with a can of hot water. She could not have been less than seventy and feeble for her years. I felt a twinge of compunction that such a one should be waiting upon me.

She set down the *cántaro* but showed no inclination toward departure. I poured out half the water, divested myself of my outer garments and endeavored to remove some of the mud and clamminess which seemed to have penetrated to one's very bones. The *muchacha* surveyed me gravely the while.

"Where had we come from? Where were we going? Were we married? To whom did the *coche* Ford belong? To us? *Verdad! Aie, madre mía*, what white arms the *señorita* had." She ripped open the sleeve of her blue cotton bodice and held out a skinny, brown forearm for comparison. It was painfully suggestive of the

legs of those pitiful small birds which protrude from an *arroz.* "And plump . . ."

"Vincente. Vincente, come quickly."

The olive drab uniform of a Guardia Civile appeared in the doorway. Below the absurd patent leather hat, brimless in front and turned up stiffly at the back, was a round, rosy, simple school boy face. Unconsciously my eyes searched for his twin since these guardians of Spain's always move in pairs. But Vincente was alone.

The *muchacha* seized him by the sleeve, drew him into the room, pointing excitedly. "See, see the arm, of the *señorita.* So fine, so white, so plump! *Hombre!*" She thrust out her forearm again. "So were mine, too, when I was young. *Aie*! Anyone will tell you. Luisita was beautiful, and gay, *simpática.* She thought of nothing but to dance . . ."

She lifted her draggled skirt with one hand, flung back her head until her earrings . . . *gitana* earrings of silver-gilt, shaped like crescents . . . tinkled against the cords of her neck, curved the other arm high above the humble black headkerchief in the immemorable pose of the *sevillana.* Her withered old body was drawn taut and proud, almost young. Her heels in shapeless *alpargatas* began to tap the floor to the clatter of castenets long stilled.

Then, as swiftly, as magically, she collapsed. Her head fell forward ashamed. Age laid its hold again upon her body. She began to sob.

Vincente put both arms about her comfortingly. Over the bowed head handkerchief he regarded us with mournful eyes.

"He is a good son, *señoras*," the *muchacha* whimpered. "A good son. Every month on his free day he comes to

see me. He brings me things. Today he brought me a cricket in a little cage. They are lucky, crickets. He is a good son . . ."

"Do you think a peseta would help?" whispered the Good Sport anxiously.

It did. Amazingly! The tears for vanished youth and beauty ceased to flow. The final sob ended in a smile. Vincente saluted and withdrew. The *muchacha*, too, retired. We heard her hobbling up the stairs kitchenward.

"Verily, the Spanish are a sociable people," the Good Sport reflected, "to whom privacy is as yet an undiscovered virtue. Whether it is our unlocked door that invites, or . . ."

Again, the door was opened violently from without. It was Pedro. He stood darkly upon the threshold in his shirt sleeves, a comb in his hand. One side of his thick black hair was plastered into a sleek and shining cap, the other stood up in wet points every one of which quivered with exasperation. He waved the comb at us, expostulating . . .

The traveller in oils had arrived. He was a fat man . . . very fat. Let the *señorita* come at once and see. The *matrimonio* was small . . .

I went. Pedro had not exaggerated. The oil buyer was indeed a very fat man. He sat upon the edge of the bed puffing and panting, while the flimsy fabric sagged under his weight. But like many people of girth, he was a kindly soul. He did not object to sharing his bed with the boy, he assured us. When one went on a journey, one took the chances of the hour. But the *señorita* could see, of course, that he was a large man who required much room.

"And I am a restless sleeper," Pedro put in fiercely. "Very restless. I turn; I twist; I roll over! I am subject to evil dreams. Often I kick . . ."

Alarm spread over the fat face of the oil buyer.

With the eye of a Procrustes, I measured the bed to the sleepers and decided that it was no fit. The *padrona* was summoned and the problem was put up to her.

She refused to see it as a problem at all.

A *matrimonio*, she argued, was a bed for two persons. Ergo, two could sleep in it. If the oil buyer was fat, as she admitted he was . . . and a fine, handsome man . . . (Bows) . . . Pedro was correspondingly thin. (No bows) In her eyes the combination seemed beautifully just.

This remained the gist of her argument which, however, was not put so succinctly. She expounded, she gesticulated, she measured her own length and width on the counterpane. At intervals, the oil buyer sighed heavily. Pedro glowered from his corner and muttered under his breath. The *muchacha* flittered about on the outskirts making sounds of siding first with the *padrona*, then with me. The face of Vincente peered in wistfully at the window.

After a quarter of an hour's wrangling which neither enlarged the size of the bed nor reduced that of the oil buyer, it was decided that Pedro should sleep at the *posada* down the street. His dinner he would eat with us. I would pay the seven pesetas for his night's lodging, dinner and morning coffee, as had been agreed. Out of this, the *padrona* should make what arrangement was necessary with the *posada*.

Harmony was restored. I went back to our room to find the Good Sport seeking what comfort might be

found under all the available blankets. I turned on the light and began the usual evening study of the Michelin road map and Baedecker for the morrow's driving. Guadix was the next town of any size, and after Guadix there were more mountains, more *vados*, more *subidas*, more *badenes*, until Granada. Like that portion of the route we had just crossed, the stretch lying in wait for us was marked IMPASSABLE IN TIME OF RAINS. And it had rained heavily all that afternoon! It was raining still!

The door burst open under the impact of a heavy body. It was the *padrona* breathless and beaming, *el niño* in her arms. The *señoras* must see her Antonio. Was he not a fine baby? She dandled him under our noses. And fat? And handsome? And intelligent? She opened her bodice and gave him the breast, walking proudly up and down the narrow confines of our room between the mounds of luggage, the while she poured out in joyful recitative the *conte* of Antonio. She sang of his birth, his christening, his first showing to the village. What she, her *marido*, her mother-in-law, and her own mother who lived in Almeria and had made the journey all the way by train to gaze upon the beauties of her grandson, the priest, and the neighbors had said upon each of these occasions.

It was a long story. It lasted until the motor diligence from Guadix rattled up and stopped before the door with much clatter of voices and sounds of boxes being hurled from the top of the bus to the cobblestoned street. Most of these were promptly carried away on the heads of their owners, but one crate from which protruded the necks of a dozen fowls was parked for the night in the entrance hall along with two pig skins

filled with olive oil. In the dimly lighted corridor their distended proportions were horribly life-like.

There was much coming and going, and repeated calls for the *padrona*. She departed on a trot, the head of the replenished Antonio bobbing over her shoulder. Dinner, she remarked in passing, was "*a las ocho*."

Hers was the last interruption. I went back to my maps; the Good Sport dozed. From the street outside came the tinkle of goat bells which told that the evening milking was in progress. The *muchacha* sallied forth with a jug, leaned against the door post and regaled the milker with a detailed account of each of the inn's guests and returned, limping up the stairs. From the kitchen regions floated the green smell of heated oil.

At eight o'clock we went upstairs. In the dining room which ran across the entire front of the house, there was a motley assortment of tables — long, round, square. A round one, placed in a corner and set with covers for three, seemed to have been appointed for us. We sat down, though there was as yet no sign of dinner.

Beneath its white cloth, the table had a sort of petticoat of grey flannel pleated about its top and falling to within one inch of the floor. Beneath this, when one lifted the petticoat and thrust in one's feet there was a luxurious warmth from a *brasero* set in a wooden frame between the table legs. It was like nothing so much as the "hover" beneath which incubator-hatched chicks find a substitute for the feathers of the mother of which Science has deprived them. This happy invention is known as a *camelia*. Truly, there blooms no flower more endearing! To sit snugly with the flannel petticoat drawn into one's lap, one's feet on the rim of the *brasero*, a little shawl about one's shoulders against the

higher draughts, is to be blissfully superior to Spain's winter.

I felt myself thawing genially.

The *padrona* was setting the large table in the centre of the room. She counted the appointments audibly to each place — three flat plates piled one on top of the other, and a deep one for the soup. Clutching an enormous circular loaf of bread to her bosom, she sashayed around the table and sliced off a generous quarter kilo to each person. Large bottles of cloudy red wine at the ends of the board, a generous cruet of oil, a basket of oranges completed the arrangement. The *padrona* surveyed it with brooding satisfaction.

About eight twenty our fellow guests began to appear. The two *commercios* already mentioned, deep in voluble conversation; the German, and the oil buyer, panting from the stairs. He sank into the arm chair at the head of the long table and tied a napkin under the lowest of his chins, in anticipation. There was also a hurried little man who looked like a journalist . . . a not very successful journalist; a young woman who seemed on intimate terms with the family for she kept jumping up and darting into the kitchen; her husband, not so young, in a tightly buttoned all-black suit and a mourning ribbon across the lapel, and their small boy . . . a horrid child in a spotted school pinafore, with eyes that never left us. Finally, arrived a large woman, bulging in plum-colored satin, with too much, and too pink, face powder. Evidently a person of consequence. The *muchacha* drew out a chair for her with ceremony.

At eight forty-five the soup came in. The *padrona* ladled it. . . . three ladles of liquid and one of the beans of which it was compounded. It was delicious

and very hot. The room began to steam with its vapor. The oil cruet was passed from hand to hand, and a generous tablespoonful of oil poured on each plate of soup. We declined. The *muchacha* thrust a bony finger between my shoulder blades and whispered a hoarse, stage "aside": "It is *good* oil . . ."

After the soup, fried fish, and with the fried fish, conversation. The plum-colored lady led off. With a fine economy she used only her knife to eat with, and saved the long-tined fork for gesticulation. Her remarks to the *commercio* sitting opposite to her were punctuated with thrusts and counter thrusts. They all ate with their knives, even the staring child who, though he could not have been more than eight, had developed an amazing facility with this article of table ware. But the plum-colored lady's method was the most dramatic. We watched her, fascinated.

After the fried fish, *bacallao*. Its unmistakable, all-pervasive odor floated out of the kitchen in advance of its arrival.

"I don't think I can," said the Good Sport.

Neither of us could. Pedro made occasion of our refusing to heap his own plate with the fragments of cod, onion and potato stewed in an oily sauce that composed the dish. The *muchacha* surveyed us sorrowfully, shook her head, and departed kitchenward, returning presently with a compensating omelet.

The child pulled his mother's sleeve to call attention to this extra favor that we were enjoying, and the heads of all those of the long table turned to stare at us.

Meanwhile, the conversation grew more animated. The man in black tilted back in his chair and addressed the room. The country, he informed us, was in a bad

THE VERMILLION TOWERS OF THE ALHAMBRA

THE QUARTER OF THE FALCONERS FROM THE TOWER OF COMARES, THE ALHAMBRA

THE AVENUE OF CYPRESSES LEADING TO THE GENERALIFE

way. He had friends at Madrid . . . one heard things . . . the government tottered . . . the oil monopoly was a piece of blundering brought about to cover other and worse blunders . . . the Press . . .

At mention of the Press, the hurried little man exploded like a rocket . . . our surmise must have been right, and he was a journalist after all. He could tell us things, and he did. He told them with a volubility, a lavishness of gesture, a torrent of excited phrases that were beyond our *Castellano*. Pedro regarded him sullenly and ate *bacallao*. His table companions nodded to him encouragingly from time to time, but did not cease their own separate conversations to be convinced.

When he drew breath at last to swallow some wine, I heard the plum-colored lady remark to her *vis-à-vis* that the back hair of the *inglesa* was assuredly false.

After the *bacallao* the cheese; and with the cheese, *carne de membrillo*. A sigh of satisfaction went around the room. The *muchacha* having set both on the centre table retired to a chair by the door, and dozed.

At that moment I became aware of a new smell that coiled subtly to my nostrils. It rose above the reek of oil from the kitchen, the *bacallao*, and the plum-colored lady's perfume . . . the acrid smell of something burning. I caught the Good Sport's eye . . . remembered the *brasero* . . .

"Your coat!" she cried.

"Yours!"

Simultaneously we sprang to our feet. Something shot out from beneath the *camelia*, something furry and yellow that gave off a shower of sparks as it ran. Something that mewed, and carried with it that choking smell of scorched and burning fur.

"The cat!" we cried to each other. "The cat in the *camelia*!"

"The cat!" The *muchacha* sprang from her doze, seized a convenient broom and pursued the unfortunate creature around the room, in and out of the chair and table legs until it discovered the door and rushed headlong down the stairs.

We sank back exhausted with laughter.

"The *inglési*," announced the plum-colored lady to the room at large, "are afraid of cats."

"Afraid of cats! What a people!"

"The cat is a useful animal. Do you know what the people of Granada do with the cats they do not want? Well, they put them in a bag and take them to the cathedral. They do, indeed! A friend of mine who lives there told me so. And then they let the cats out and go away. And there they stay until they die."

It was the consensus of opinion that the people of Granada had hit upon a happy solution of what to do with a superfluity of cats.

After this, there seemed nothing left for us but to retire. We made our bows and "*buenas noches*," and departed. Behind our retreating backs conversation rose in a happy crescendo.

In the hall below, Vincente slumbered peacefully, his head pillowed on the fattest oilskin. Beside him on a chair was an empty plate which had contained *bacallao*, and beside the plate the cat squatted on its haunches, lapping eagerly the few luscious tid-bits that remained around the edge. It glared at us as we passed, out of an unforgiving eye.

Later, much later, there were footsteps descending the stairs, bedward. The family with the small boy

occupied the room next to ours. The argument, if it was an argument, between the father and the journalist . . . if he was a journalist . . . continued at the door, with occasional interpolations from the wife. The noise and the light awoke the fowls in the crate at the end of the passage . . . a cock crowed.

At last even that died away! Peace descended upon the Inn of the Cat and the Camelia. I drew back the sliding shutter of the tiny peep-hole window beside my bed and saw above the wet bank a corner of sky and a star; knew that the morrow would be clear and we could go on; and knowing, fell asleep.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

GLORIOUS GRANADA

NDALUSIA came to meet us with a smile.

The sun shone. The *muchacha* bringing our hot water wore a jonquil in her hair. The milkman sang as he rattled his cans. I awoke to find myself staring into the friendly brown gaze of the family goat. She grazed on the bank beside the brook and found the tiny window by my bed as interesting to peek into as I found it to look from.

Baza, by sunlight, proved to be one of those towns of long lost importance that dot the fringes of Andalusia. Recarred built a church there. The Moors fortified it as an outpost of their kingdom of Granada; the *Reyes Católicos* besieged it for seven weary months. Isabella's troops entered it in triumph on December fourth, 1489.

We went out in the early morning to spy out the land. San Maximo's church had an interesting side wall, stout and roundly curved like a fortress, and ornamented with heraldic devices carved of stone, still showing through its fresh Spring coat of whitewash. A beautiful wide window let into the sacristy behind a finely wrought iron *reja*. The church itself was entered at the side by a long flight of steps. Grasses grew between the stones and provided pasturage for the *padre's*

MALAGA LIES BETWEEN MOUNTAINS AND SEA

THROUGH A VILLAGE IN ANDALUSIA

goats. They nibbled investigatingly at the feet of worshippers as they passed.

But for two wide thoroughfares which were really the continuation of the *Travesia* through Baza, the streets were narrow, straight and dark. A house with a gracious arcade around the third story . . . by Arab law the roof is sacred to the women . . . had its openings filled with pierced wooden screens in lieu of glass. The ancient Moorish market place opened out of a narrow stone-paved street across which the roofs all but met.

There was an Alcazar, too, with a courtyard protected from the vulgar street by carved wooden columns. All the cannon of Doña Isabel now standing, open throats down, before the *Ayuntamiento*, had not destroyed the oriental spirit of the ancient town.

The citadel, however, and the great wall, and the girdle of orchards that once swept around the base of the Javalçon and ran down into the valley are only memories. The gardens were Baza's chief glory. Moorish poets sang of them as second only to the pleasure grounds of the Alhambra. The ringing of King Ferdinand's axes as he razed them was answered by the wailing of the citizens within the walls. So thick grew the trees that though four thousand woodsmen were employed, they cleared a space no greater than ten paces in a single day. Today there is not a single tree . . . not a stump left, to tell the tale of Baza's lost glory. The hillsides of Andalusia are as smooth and bare as a Capuchin's pate.

When Isabella, herself, came to visit the army, and Mohammed ben Hassan, watching from the citadel, saw the queen and princess attended by the aged cardinal

of Spain drawing near the Christians' camp, he turned to his knights: "Gentlemen," he said, "the fate of Baza is sealed."

The road out of Baza brought us around the steep conical Javalçon which rises nearly five thousand feet high. Up its rocky cliff the Abencerrage warrior escaped unwounded from the attack of three mounted knights of Castile.

We went on over ever heightening hills, all barren *despoblados*, by a tortuous road that dipped and twisted and dove in and out of the red-brown Alpuxarras.

Somewhere in these desolate hillsides stood Galera, the very syllables of whose name ring with horror, though its site is long since lost. Don John sacked it in his final victory over the remnants of Boabdil's forces in the Alpuxarras. In its streets, twenty-eight hundred Moors were done to death. Four hundred women and children were delivered over to the *halbardiers* and murdered before the Prince.

"It seemed to go beyond justice or Spanish clemency," remarks Ginez Perez de Hita who was an eyewitness.

When the massacre was complete, the future hero of Lepanto ordered the walls razed, and the town site buried forever under tons of salt.

But the horror that was Galera lasted. The desolate region became the resort of the *bandoleros* who figure in so many Andalusian ballads. Even as late as half a century ago, travellers by coach invariably engaged extra guards for this stage of their journey to Granada.

On this day, however, the road was far from lonely. It was Saturday, and the gypsy folk were going into

THE BAKERS OF ALCALÁ HOMEWARD BOUND

EL FLAMMENCO — GRANADA

Guadix for the weekly animal fair. There was a marked absence of carts. Andalusia travels in the saddle. Indeed, carts would be scarcely practical on the narrow, winding paths that link village and village. Men and women rode on donkeys, their legs sticking out ludicrously over the stuffed panniers. Or the man rode and smoked his *cigarrillo* under his broad-brimmed Andalusian hat, while the woman walked behind. We passed a *gitano* tinker and his family, ass and children were hung with iron ware for the fair. And one old woman alone, seated high on her beast between two distended *alforjas* from each of which protruded the snout of a loudly protesting pig.

We came into Guadix under an avenue of sycamores across the narrow, stone bridge that spans the River of the Water of Life, (Wadi-Ash–i.e., Guadix). The roofs of the town, which is older than the Moors or the Goths, ran up the hills to the high peak of the Moorish castle where the Abencerrages swore fealty to *El Rey Chico* and enmity to his father. Below it, and lower than the *carretera*, in a green mead by the river was the Saturday animal fair. The chatter and squawks of fowls, the braying of the donkeys, the bleating of sheep and goats, and the squeals of pigs being poked with investigating sticks to display their fatness, betrayed it to our ears even before our eyes discovered it, or the market discovered us. When it did, it was with difficulty that we escaped without a young kid, a turkey gobbler, or a pair of live hares.

An old man, his head thrust through a wide hole in his shawl so that it fell about his leanness like a priest's chasuble, sat under a thornbush by the roadside and combed the back of his pig, while crying the animal's fine

points to prospective buyers. His words ran into a song:

"This is my pig
He is mine
Man, I raised him myself
From the day his mother pushed him
from her teats,
He is mine . . .
See how fat he is!
How sleek!
How well nourished! . . .
Ay, *madre mía!* how intelligent!
My pig . . .

Women walked about through the crowd leading geese and turkeys on strings, and with a couple of bright-eyed cocks under each arm. By the sheep pen the crowd was thickest. In the centre of it, the local veterinary was examining the eyes of a great, fleece laden ram. A pair of massive brown bullocks stood patiently amid the tumults . . . from the picket line of burros an ass thrust out her neck and brayed.

The fair was spread at the crossroads before the entrance into the town. To the left the road ran upward and in at the square-topped brown gates. Through them Aisha had hurried her two sons, Boabdil and Yûsuf, after their flight from the Alhambra. Here Boabdil was proclaimed king.

Baza and Guadix were the keys to Granada.

To the right the road swung around the curve of the hill under the lee of weird red cliffs which were etched into fantastic conical shapes not unlike the marching grey pilgrims of Lluch. Caves were cut into these ruddy rocks, with whitewashed wooden doors and clay chimneys spouting smoke from the top of the ledge.

We climbed steadily higher. It was all red country — red winding roads that swarmed up the sides of a long series of hills from the crests of which we looked down into sharp valleys through which streams coursed muddily. Above us to the south, towered the snow peaks of the Sierra Nevadas. The white glistening pinnacles rose above a bank of cloud that made them seem cloud palaces themselves, not solid mountain mass. The Pico de Mulhacen . . . "of Muley Hassan," father of the luckless *Rey Chico* . . . grandest of all, we knew to be eleven thousand feet high. From it, one looks northward to the strategic Sierra Morena which is the wall of New Castile, and southward across the straits to the Atlas mountains in Morocco. It was hard to believe that we ourselves had climbed twenty-five hundred feet since leaving Murcia.

The road dipped and plunged, following the river Fardes through the lonely foothills. The lower banks were spread thickly with gorse. There were no farms, no tilled fields, no villages . . . only a great emptiness under the ægis of the snow peaks.

So, late in the afternoon, we came into Granada. From the summit of the ridge, the mists rolled away. A pale, rain-washed sunshine flooded the earth. High above us on the left, the Sierra Nevadas rose in a high tide of magnificence against the southern sky rim. Before and below us swelled the round breast of a hill that had zig-zagging across it the red brown wall of the demesne of the Alhambra. Far below in the crevass of the hill lay the City of Pomegranates. And beyond, to north and west spread out like a great green fan, rolled the *vega*, a limitless, calm sea of wheat fields threaded by its two rivers, the Darro and the Xenil.

"Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor valley, rock or hill . . ."

It is one of the most famous views in all the world. Here, just a century before us, Washington Irving drew rein to look back a last time on the palace wherein he found so much more than a lodging. It had moved even that spoiled darling of fortune, Charles V, out of his self-complacency to exclaim: "Unhappy he who lost all this."

Granada is the high climax of Spain, and the high climax of Granada is the Alhambra. Not that the Alhambra is Spain at all. Rather it is a page out of the Arabian Nights, the enchanted palace which sprang into being when Aladdin rubbed his lamp.

The humble exterior makes the magnificence hidden within those red-brown walls the more dramatic. Only one learned in the witchery of the East could surmise the glories concealed within the inchoate jumble of courts and towers. The Alhambra was fortress first, palace afterward. Beside its rambling silhouette, the classic grandeur of Charles V's Italianate palace stands as a perpetual reminder of the gulf between East and West.

I do not resent the intrusion of that heavy foot into fairyland. True, one regrets the lost loveliness it trampled out of existence forever. But its presence there, just behind the wooden doors at the end of the Court of Myrtles, is the reminder of "the world too much with us" that adds the final poignant beauty to the things of faery.

Charles did his utmost to conquer the Alhambra. (Was this an Oedipus complex extended to the second

generation, and jealousy of his grandmother?) But after four centuries, Mohammed and Yûsuf remain invincible. The Alhambra acknowledges but one conqueror . . . Doña Isabel.

No sooner does one leave the noisy, meaningless streets of the town of Granada and start up the steep Calle de Gomeres, past the curio and antique shops, to the gate of the park, than the enchantment begins. Over the massive portal Charles V's monogram and the three pomegranates of Granada unite the old regime and the new.

Within the park confines, tall elms rise high above one's head, fluttering tiny, new, green leaves. The ground beneath them is matted thick with ivy and periwinkles starred over with pale blue flowers. Tufts of blossoming garlic sprout between the stones. Everywhere is the ripple and whisper of innumerable, tiny water brooks. Nightingales sing divinely out of the thickets of ivy and wild rose.

The Spanish nightingale does not wait for dusk. He has escaped the cruel enchantment that silences his English brothers until sunset. Love is his all day.

The park covers the hillside toward the town. It is enclosed by a stout wall. From the windows of the Hall of Ambassadors, one may see the red-brown boundary line cleave the Quarter of the Falconers, El Albaicín, where the Moorish nobles lived in a splendor that rivalled that of the palace on the hill. Then it turns on the horizon and returns around the Generalife. The summer palace stands still higher than the Alhambra, where the snow-cooled winds from the Sierras sweep directly upon it.

Within that boundary, the kings of Granada lived

in an Oriental splendor that mocked the Prophet's adjuration.

Yûsuf I, who built the wall and the baths and the Palace of Comares with its long patio and the water beds flanked by myrtles, built as well the stately Gate of Judgment through which one approaches the plateau before the palace. We paused to look up at the famous hand and key carved in the plaster above the arch. When the hand should reach up and take the key . . . so Washington Irving's guide told him, and he us . . . then, and only then, would the Alhambra fall into Christian hands.

Here sat Yûsuf and his successors down to the luckless Boabdil, and administered justice "in the gate" according to the word of the Koran. Here at a hastily contrived altar, Isabella and Ferdinand heard Mass on that fateful January second that saw Boabdil fleeng into the Alpuxarras with the stern eyed Aisha like an avenging fury at his side. That morning, the Crescent was hauled down from the citadel, and the banner of Castile, embroidered by the Queen's own hand, was run up in its stead.

The invincible palace fortress had fallen . . . fallen to a woman. Ferdinand's may have been the military genius, and "God on the side of the bigger guns," but the unremitting impulse behind the forces of Aragon and Castile was Doña Isabel.

All that is mortal of the great Queen lies in the cathedral in the town. Doubtless, she was not a little tired and glad to rest. Her life had been spent in the saddle riding from Old Castile to the Sierra Nevadas. She had lived in soldiers' camps, and she had paid the price for this in the weak health and premature deaths of all

but one of her children, and that one of unsound mind. But she had accomplished that for which she labored — she had wrested the last proud stronghold from the infidel, and she had made Castile the ruler of a united Spain.

I think her spirit walks those moon filled patios. It was she, not a mythical Lindaraxa, whom Irving glimpsed, standing in the cypress shade of the Favorite's secret garden. One sees her moving majestically through the halls attended by her pages, Diego and Fernando Colon, their father away on the high seas. The monograms of the *Reyes Católicos* appear again and again in the tiles of the wainscoting. One does not resent them as one does the recurrent C. V. and his arrogant *Plus Ultra.*

The Alhambra is not one palace, but a succession of palaces — dream opening magically into dream. Mohammed I, first of the Nazride kings, began the earliest of them about 1250. Yûsuf, a century later, built the Tower of Comares, so called because the workmen came from the village of Comares. In an upper chamber, the supplanted Aisha and her two sons were imprisoned, and from the windows she lowered Boabdil by scarves to the arms of the Abencerrage knights waiting below. Thence, he was hurried over the hills to Guadix to be crowned.

The tower rises from one end of the Court of Myrtles. The lower floor is entirely taken up by the Sala de Barca, so named from the vaulted wooden ceiling which resembles the hull of a ship, and the stately Hall of Ambassadors.

Throned on his divan here, the Sultan Muley Abdul Hassan made his historic retort to the Castilian am-

bassadors' demand for tribute money; "Our mint coins only scimitars." Through the three beautiful ajimez windows, divided into halves by delicate Moorish columns, one looks down on the impetuous Darro "hurrying to wed the Xenil," as the saying goes in Granada. Its sands once yielded gold. On the occasion of Charles V's visit to the Alhambra with his bride, the city presented the young Empress with a crown from the *Rio de Oro* —— Darro.

Mohammed V added to these earlier palaces, a whole new one centering around the Court of the Lions. How swiftly the walls rose may be imagined when one realizes that the domes and honeycomb ceilings with their stalactites of gold and blue and crimson, their exotic reliefs, their painted legends from the Koran *sufas* in praise of the builders, are all of plaster. They were made in moulds and set up complete. Some patient observer counted one hundred and fifty-two different designs impressed in the plaster walls of the Hall of Ambassadors. The labor was furnished by Christian captives who were chained at night in the underground granaries.

Much of the original coloring remains, softened and mellowed by the centuries of sun and rain that have been blown through the unglazed apertures. Dulled, too, by the smoky fires of the gypsies, who camped here when Philip V diverted the state funds set apart for the maintenance of the Alhambra to his own privy purse. In many places, the coloring has been successfully restored.

One envies Gautier his white night in the Court of the Lions. "O, thou who beholdest these lions fixed in their places, Observe that they lack only life in order to be

perfect," runs in part the Arabic inscription around the fountain basin. Did one need assurance that this is fairyland, the expressions of the beasts were enough. So bland are they, they almost purr. It was in the chamber that opens from the south of the court that Boabdil laughed to see the blood of the Abencerrages run in a scarlet stream through the fountain channel. The stones keep the red tint to this day.

One does not see the Alhambra in one day, or in two or three. One needs time to grow accustomed to the maze of richness, the intricacy of stucco ornament.

Always one has the sense that it is enchanted ground on which one treads. Court after court unfolds before one's eyes. Pools and fountains, and colonnaded niches adorned with intricate arabesques where the sultan and his vizier took their silken ease, and watched the dancing girls; tiny secret patios where, it would seem, a sloe-eyed houri of the harem still languishes in the shade of cypress trees four centuries old.

A suite of upper rooms, beamed and plastered in the Flemish style, was added by Charles V. They served Irving for a lodging in the winter of 1828. Here he wrote his Tales. A tablet on the wall records his stay. Irving, more than any one other person, brought about the salvation of the palace of the Moorish kings. Officially, as American Minister to Spain, and unofficially, as historian and novelist, he stirred Madrid from its apathy and turned the thoughts of Spain and the world to the Alhambra.

The rooms lead to the high balcony of the Queen's Dressing Room, the Peinador de la Reina. The name of the Moorish favorite for whom Yûsuf built the tower is long since lost, but three Isabellas sat there later with

their ladies . . . la *Católica*, Isabella of Portugal, the sweet, grave consort of the Emperor Charles . . . for whom he had the walls of the Peinador painted with the story of his successful campaigns . . . and the restless, scheming Isabella Farnese, wife of the Bourbon Philip V.

From an ornamental grating in one corner, heated and scented air was sent up into the draughty chamber.

From the Peinador, one looks down over the garden of the Favorite to the gorge of the Darro and the white houses of the Albaicín on the opposite shore. There stood the house of the weathercock, the removal of which foreshadowed the fall of Granada. Dark, tortuous alleys cleave a way between the impassive palaces that once were splendid with the wealth of *el Andaluz*, the Land of the West. Now the Albaicín is the gypsy quarter. Gypsy dances are staged for tourists. But after the more picturesque and less tourist-visited settlements of Totana and Cullar de Baza and Guadix, it was disappointing in our eyes.

To the southeast rises the steep and higher eminence crowned with the Generalife, and beyond it, the snow crest of the high sierras. Tall Cypress trees strike solemn notes of exclamation against the cloudless blue sky. The park of the Alhambra runs upward to the Generalife gate past the square topped red tower where the Christian Isabel de Solis languished in captivity.

In the intimate seclusion of this miniature palace, the Moorish kings spent the heated summer months. There, beside one of the cypresses still standing in the garden, Queen Morayma met her Abencerrage lover, with what bloody results the Court of Lions was to witness.

We went slowly down the avenue of cypresses from

the upper gate to the door of the palace. The branches met to form a dense, dark green wall on either side. Their pointed tops towered twenty feet above our heads. Before us rose the tiny summer palace which seems scarcely more than a shell to enclose its long, narrow inner garden. Balconies and colonnades run around the green enclosure with its water tanks and myriad fountains. Jets concealed in shrubbery and roses play in arching curves from either side of the garden to the central pool. The perfume of orange flowers and hyacinths, and the fainter pungent orris of beds of low-growing purple iris was on the air.

We had chosen to stay at a *típico* Spanish hotel in the town of Granada. Under our balcony each morning the water-seller's donkey brayed us from our slumbers. Before the *venta* across the cobblestoned square lounged a picturesque group of muleteers in wide felt hats, and the short jackets that are a part of the costume of El Andaluz. We were puzzled for a time by the long orange cords, the thickness of a man's finger, which they wore around their necks. Watching, we discovered these were lighters, slow-burning fuses to ignite *cigarrillos* and evade the government tax on matches.

All day long the stones rang under the ceaseless trot-trot of donkeys feet. Trains of faithful little beasts in the gay, embroidered bridles dangling tassels and feather pompons, passed and repassed. The lead ass wore a bell with a wooden clapper whose sound was signal for those who came after. Their straw panniers were stuffed with gravel, sand, stones for building, corn, oil, *demi-juanas* of wine . . . how like the *lengua castellana* to feminize the blunt English demi-john!

The Empress Eugenie was born in Granada. She was of that famous Guzman family which gave more than one queen and grandmaster to Castile, as well as *el Bueno*, the hero of Tarifa. Near the Bibarambla in the centre of old Granada stands the birthplace of the tragic empress. In the Bibarambla, Saracen knights held their tourneys. Here, too, the Moorish *toreros* fought the big black bulls that were bred at Ronda, while noble spectators cheered from the balconies of the houses, and the common people risked life and limb in the square with the bull. At a fiesta in honor of Philip V one of the balconies fell, burying two hundred persons. During the panic that ensued thieves divested the ladies of their long golden earrings by the quick and efficacious device of cutting off the ears to which the rings were attached!

In the smaller Plaza de los Lobos, nearby, wolves heads used to be redeemed at four ducats apiece, and displayed on poles around the square.

During the Inquisition, the Bibarambla was the scene of several *auto de fés*. Here, too, by order of Cardinal Ximenes, were burned the million volumes from the Moorish University. To a Moor who had embraced Christianity fell the doubtful honor of setting fire to the pyre. Only three hundred volumes were saved and despatched to the Cardinal's new university at Alcalá.

There is little left of the University which Yûsuf founded when Cordova fell into Christian hands and its university was reduced to ashes. The Catholic Kings used it as a residence, and the façade and interior, all but the fine artesonado ceilings, were remodelled out of their older Moorish style.

Christians and Jews no less than the true believers

A STREET IN SEVILLE

THE GATE OF THE MACARENA IN SEVILLE

of Islam were among its students. There is a story that the Pope, Clement VII, when he was still a cardinal studied here. He was a friend of Yûsuf, a friendship that continued after Clement wore the triple diadem, and gave rise to rumors that he had allied himself with the Black Arts of the infidel.

Close to the University, the Moorish market place is still perfect. One walks down the narrow alley between the horseshoe arches, each sheltering a tiny shop, where merchants from Fez and Bagdad once squatted with their wares . . . Ali Baba, Cassim, and Sinbad have trod the stones before us.

The cathedral of Granada is the least interesting church in Spain . . . a pompous sixteenth century structure on the site of the principal mosque of the city. To the mosque door, Herman Perez de Pulgar pinned the scroll with the legend "*Ave Maria*" with his dagger . . . a profanation to which the indignant Moors quickly retaliated. He crept into the city at night unobserved, through the underground conduit of the Darro. As a reward for his boldness, his heirs were accorded the privilege of sitting in the cathedral choir!

A Gothic chapel behind the old Lonja of the city, now a part of the cathedral building, enshrines the tombs of the *Reyes Católicos*, poor Juana la Loca and her faithless, handsome Philip.

The exquisitely carved marble tombs with their recumbent figures lie before the altar, behind a handsome gilded iron *reja*. Even in death, Isabel's head is turned to the husband who forgot her so quickly. Below, in the crypt, lie the four, plain leaden coffins.

The sacristy of the Capilla Real guards relics of the Catholic Kings. Vestments and the standard of Castile

embroidered by the queen; her missal, Ferdinand's sword, and the sceptre and crown of Doña Isabel, the last a lovely delicate coronal of silver gilt.

At Granada we parted from Pedro. We had suggested that he stay over an extra day to see the Alhambra. But he shook his head. His words were not in our dictionary, but their purport was unmistakable. He would not be bothered with the Alhambra.

With a wedge of goat's cheese in one pocket, a red sausage in the other, a half kilo of bread and two litres of red wine under his arm, he set forth in the third class carriage on his sixteen hour return journey to Alicante.

"If he ever came to New York . . ." we suggested.

But his reaction to New York was only slightly less disdainful than to the Alhambra. He shook his head . . . then smiled broadly . . . bowing gallantly:

"When we came again to Alicante . . ."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

WE ADVENTURE IN ANDALUSIA

OUR way out of Granada lay over the bridge which binds the marriage of the Xenil and the Darro. Granada, city of gardens and pomegranates, lay behind us. Behind us, too, on their wooded height against the turquoise sky rose the vermillion towers of the Alhambra, chief among them the square-topped gate to the southwest through which *el Rey Chico* rode down the hill to give over the keys of the palace to the *reyes católicos*.

He made one last request, that the gate should be walled up behind him, and Doña Isabel agreed. Neither king nor commoner has entered the palace by that way since.

The gate and the tiny hermitage church of San Sebastian, once a mosque, which stands just beyond the bridge, keep the last memory of Boabdil. The delicate horseshoe arch of its portal remains unimpaired. Here the keys of the Alhambra were handed over to Ferdinand who presented them to the Queen. In return, they released to "The Luckless One" his son whom Castile had held as a hostage. Then the sorrowing Moors wheeled their horses and rode southward into the lonely Alpuxarras with only one backward look at their paradise lost.

As we halted by the church for a last lingering back-

ward look at the regal city, we were leaving, we recalled the words of the little chambermaid in Murcia whom we asked, exercising our Castilian, if she had a mother. She folded her hands, lifted her eyes piously. Her mother, she told us with due reverence was "in glory in Granada."

Before us stretched the wide *vega* opening in a gigantic green fan from the knot of snow-wreathed Sierras with Granada tucked at their feet. The road threads a dusty white ribbon across the greening wheat fields into Santa Fé, the town which Isabella's army built in eighty days to replace the encampment of tents which a lamp overturned in the queen's pavilion set ablaze. Its dusty plaza was the scene of the memorable combat between Garcilasso de la Vega and the Moorish champion Yarfe. Over the door of the heavy pretentious church is carved a lance and the famous scroll with the legend *Ave Maria*, in memory of the Castilian knight's revenge for the slight offered his two queens.

A drab, dispirited town, Santa Fé, despite its romantic origin. In one of the ugly, impassive houses by the square, Columbus pleaded his cause before the sovereigns. A blind ballad singer, his faded cape draped melodramatically about his gaunt shoulders, his sightless eyes turned upward to the sun, stood in the plaza, the centre of an intent crowd. He was singing one of the interminable songs of the *bandoleros* who used to frequent the roads of Andalusia, and for whom, by what strange irony of fate, many of the peaceful streets in the towns are named. The long nasal wail of his song followed us.

The sierra rose before us at the edge of the *vega*, grey and forbidding, a steep, stony hillside too poor to pasture even the inevitable goats.

To one who thinks of *El Andaluz* as a soft and smiling land, the fact of Andalusia comes as a grim surprise. Behind the suave and mellow romanticism of Seville, the glamour of Granada, the languorous fascination of Malaga and silver Cadiz, lie stretches of cruel, grey desert, mile after mile of barren wilderness, empty of villages, treeless and sad. The *campo* is broken by stony, sharp-edged sierras. There are few roads, only dusty trails for mule travel. It is here, rather than in the Sierpes or the Bibarambla, that one comes close to understanding the strain of cruelty which underlies the Andalusian temperament. It springs as inevitably from these bleak and verdureless hills as the mysticism of Castile takes color from the brown plains that stretch away from Avila.

Our road traversed a barren, stony upland between two rugged sierras. High up on their sides clung the cottages of shepherds. The sky was blue, as only skies south of the Pyrenees can be, and without trace of cloud. High overhead a vulture wheeled in strong, ominous flight. There was neither tree nor blade of fresh grass in sight, only a wide and barren loneliness.

At a turn of the road, we passed a company of horsemen. They wore the flapping leather chaps and broad, straight-brimmed, high-crowned hats of Andalusia. Slung from each silver-mounted saddle was a long barrelled rifle. They road with the simple dignity of those born to saddle leather and stirrups. They were bound for a neighboring ranch to round up the bulls destined for the Easter *corridas de toros*. One remembered Sorolla's painting of the roundup, *El Encierro*. These men with their unsmiling faces, their inherent dignity, might have sat for the figures in the painting.

We could see Loxa seated proudly on its conical hill with the greater sierra behind it, long before we drove through its gates. Loxa was once the western wall of Boabdil's kingdom, as Baza guarded it from the east. Washington Irving stopped there in a primitive inn whose landlord regaled him with tales of the *bandoleros*. Loxa had a tiny square framed by high-balconied, white houses whose fronts were splashed with pink geraniums. The women, loitering to market, wore the curved combs of Granada.

We had not intended going to Malaga. Our route, outlined by the Michelin Guide, pointed straight westward to Archidona and Antequera, thence to Seville. But coming out of Loxa we took the wrong turn. The road, fine and well graded, mounted grandly the long sierra that we had seen behind Loxa from the east. We found ourselves climbing steadily. Ximena began to pant. Presently, far to the south, through a gap between further rows of hills, we caught a glimpse of the sea.

Now by all the laws of compass and chart, if we were headed for Archidona, the sea had no business to be appearing thus stealthily at our right hand. I began to have misgivings. But the road was excellent, the air clear and bright, the day only a little past noon. If the road went that way, why not Malaga?

At Colmenar, a village lying in a deep cleft between a fold of hills with only a mule track to link it to the high-road, we waited for two old men to come to us along the trail. But to our questions about Archidona, they returned evasive answers. Your true Spaniard will never admit that he does not know. In time, and after meeting countless wrong directions, one gath-

THE PATIO OF GEORGE BORROW AND HIS VIEW OF THE GIRALDA

A COURTYARD IN THE HEART OF SEVILLE

ers road sense which consists of asking the same question of as many persons as one meets and reducing the sum of their replies to the least common multiple of truth.

It is surprising, too, how small a radius the Spanish countryman's knowledge covers. He knows the next town to his own, but beyond that stretch the limitless possibilities of the universe.

The forty kilometers between Loxa at the edge of the *vega* of Granada and Malaga on the sea are made up of ridge upon ridge of sharp-edged hills — part of the great Sierra Nevadas. They lie close packed on each other with deep cleft valleys between. The few villages are poor and widely scattered. Most of them, like Colmenar, lying off the highroad, are isolated as completely as Andorra in the Pyrenees. Here is the Andalusia untouched by the tourist. Song and dance and village festival are as they were when the legend of Doña Isabel travelled through the province. It was in this lonely mountain region that the Marquis of Cadiz and his warriors lost their way when they would have marched on Malaga, and fell a prey to roving bands of Moors.

From either side of the ridge along which our road wound southward toward the sea of which now and again we caught far, blue vistas, we looked down a precipitous mountainside to the shadowy coves. It was for all the world like driving along the ridge pole of a giant's roof, a roof that curved and heaved with sudden sharp ascents and swift down grades, a roof whose sides sloped away from the angle with sickening conclusiveness. The road itself was too narrow to permit of turning around, and there was no retaining wall on either side —

nothing, if a brake slipped, to keep us from plunging blindly down into the deep ravine. By our map, we were twenty-five hundred feet above sea level, a drop to be made in seven miles.

It was while rounding a serpentine curve of the ridge pole that I felt Ximena's brakes become suspiciously loose. A few rods of using the reverse in place of the brake, then an ominous slipping and smoking, and the pedals under my feet were suddenly as though disconnected with the car. I found myself powerless to stop the wheels. Below us, on either side, the sierra fell away to a depth of several hundred feet. The smooth sides yielded neither tree nor shrubbery to check a fall. Far below us, by the sea, the towers of Malaga were plainly visible.

With the first and only fear that I was to know in all our Spanish adventure, I let Ximena slide to rest against an outcropping ledge of rock. There she stopped, her front wheels projecting several inches over the precipice. I got out to reconnoiter.

Since leaving Colmenar eight kilometers behind, we had met no one, not even a muleteer. Leaving the Good Sport to guard Ximena and the luggage, I started along the road in quest of what help the gods might provide. And so stumbled upon adventure.

For, a kilometer along the way, I came upon a *venta*, a roadside wineshop. A woman leaned against the doorway. She was middle-aged, misshapen and ugly, but she wore her shining black hair piled high on her head with two pink roses tucked into the coils. Before her — on a bench in the sun — sat three muleteers. A train of eight or ten donkeys with heavily laden canvas panniers stood dejectedly in the road. The

muleteers were singing. Their shrill, nasal voices rose in a *honda*, a song of wild ups and downs, the music of El Andaluz, as ancient as Tarik, and strangely expressive of this mountainous region. At sight of me, an Inglesa, arrived without visible means of approach, they broke off their singing, and sat open-mouthed and transfixed. The woman crossed herself hastily.

The donkeys, like that of the *carbonero* of Raixa, seemed to have been provided by Providence. I visualized the Good Sport and myself riding into Malaga enthroned above our luggage.

But at that moment there came a warning honk and whirr. A heavy truck laden with crushed stone shot toward us, coming from Malaga. It came to rest beside the *venta*. A swarthy face leaned forward around the curve of the top, and a bold voice cried: "Wine, woman, and quickly."

Here was luck indeed!

I approached the god in the machine and begged his help. He came and the muleteers came after him. He sniffed the smoke that eddied from Ximena's hood and jerked it open. A muleteer, pressed into service, ran back to the *venta* returning presently with a jug containing two litres of olive oil. These the god poured over Ximena's smoking brakes, pausing to laugh and slap his chest, telling us what a *buen hombre* he was. From Cadiz. Too, (more laughter and more slaps) he had worked as a mechanic for eight years in the Ford assembly plant in Barcelona. *El coche* Ford held no secrets from him.

He did mysterious things to Ximena with the olive oil and handfuls of gravel from the road, which he rubbed into the brake linings. And he drove us the

seven remaining miles into Malaga — down the long, winding, steep descent, at intervals taking his hand off the wheel to point out some particularly charming *quinta* wreathed in wisteria or bougainvillea, or to laugh again at the enormity of the joke.

Then he delivered us into the hands of a puzzled Ford agent.

"But you can't drive a Ford over that road," the agent protested.

"But we have," we assured him, and pointed to Ximena in proof.

Beside its raisins and its salt fish, the last a delicacy once dear to the Phœnicians across the Straits, Malaga is famous for its winter climate which is reputed to be the most equable of any city in Europe. It was basking in June-like warmth. Along the broad paseo, under the six rows of royal palms, with the sea on one side and gardened villas on the other, were beds of roses in full bloom.

A languorous, southern city, dreaming in the sweet curve of its blue bay — crowds loitering along the Paseo in the warm, scented dusk while the bells in the tall, sun-baked cathedral tower that rises out of a shabby garden cluttered with calla lilies and myrtles and fuchsias, peal out over the water. Their tone is rich and unctuous. There is in them none of the stern fanaticism of Castile, none of the urgent, silvery sweetness of Seville's Giralda.

The comfortable *malagueñans* who occupy the spidery-legged chairs under the palms pay scant heed to their summons. The men smoke very fat, black cigars. The women are hatless, or they wear the tall comb

never seen north of the Sierra Morena, and the cascade of black lace to the shoulders.

They are not beautiful, these women of Malaga. They have none of the spirited aristocracy which distinguishes the *sevillanas*. But they have fine eyes, and a trick of smiling gently that is somehow expressive of this heavy-lidded, slumberous city.

Presently, a motor rolls out from the geranium-wreathed gates of the Hotel Principe de las Asturias. In it are two ladies, one elderly, a trifle severe, is the Princess Beatrice of England. The other is stately, and beautiful and blonde under the tall comb and black mantilla which she wears as proudly as a crown. A respectful murmur runs through the crowd, "*la Reina.*"

"But she looks sad," the Good Sport whispers.

Royalty winters in Malaga and summers in San Sebastian. The inhabitants of both places evince a proprietary interest in their sovereigns.

"*El Rey,*" remarked our *camerero* with a flourish of his napkin, "*El Rey está muy simpático.*"

This interest does not extend to the King's sons. Will, as republican Barcelona and the progressive element of Madrid prophesy, the long line of rulers of Castile end with Alfonso XIII? Because of the ill health of the two older princes, royalist hopes center on the King's third son, Prince Juan.

There is music in Malaga, the seductive strains of the *malagueña*, which threads all the life of the city, religious and social, grave and gay. The boot-black whistles it as he rubs your shoe leather; the milkman rattling his early morning cans under your window, trolls it lustily; the drovers herding the magnificent cream colored Andalusian oxen down from the hill

farms to the cattle fair set their pace to its measure. In the Cathedral, the choir is practising for the approaching Holy Week ceremonies. The shrill voices of small choristers, and the deeper bass notes of the canons send the familiar strains echoing down the aisles.

In another week, while Malaga celebrates the *semana santa*, the processions of masked *penitentes*, escorting the lighted *pasos* through the narrow winding streets to the Cathedral, will move to the same motif.

The *malagueña* is the soul of Malaga as the *sardana* is of Cataluña, and the staccato *sevillana* of the city of the Guadalquivir.

When Cervantes wrote, the Percheles, the old fish market beyond the city, was the centre of Malaga's life. Did one intend going buccaneering to the Spiceries, one could pick up a likely crew, and none too particular, from the crowds of seamen and fisherfolk who hung about the stalls.

On the last day of our stay, we walked along the beach after sunset to see the seines drawn in. The fishermen were divided into two groups. They waded into the surf, each man armed with a short rope weighted at one end with a stone. The weighted end he flung around the end rope of the seine, and then ran up the beach, loosening it there and returning to fling the rope a second time, in two endless chains. The great brown net sagged under its silver freight. They tumbled it out on the sand — heaps of jumping sardines and salmonets that glittered under the light of the bobbing lanterns. The glow fell on a horrible writhing black and purple mass of tentacles and gaping mouth — an octopus, and on a heap of pink and violet jellyfish and sea anemones — strange fruit of *mare nostrum*.

Ximena again. Ximena revived and refreshed by skillful hands; Ximena brought into the hotel garden where we were drinking our breakfast coffee and eating grape blossom honey on crusty rolls, by a smiling youth with a wisteria cluster behind his ear. He had wreathed Ximena's radiator with pink geranium blooms. We drove down the *Paseo*, and on to the road to Antequera like an advance of the *semana santa* pomp.

We had a long, driving day before us, all steady climbing for the first fifty-seven kilometers into Antequera, lying beyond those same Sierra Nevadas from whose perilous ridge pole the truck driver from Cadiz had rescued us. Fortunately for Ximena's brakes and our nerves, it was a different route and one less precipitous. The views behind us as we mounted into the hills past terraced vineyards of the famous raisin grapes were superb, a panorama of wide, blue Mediterranean. Then the mountains folded us close. At Almogia, straggling up and down a lesser hill, we parked the car beside the road and walked along the narrow mule track into the mountain town to fill our lunch basket. The market crowded the plaza before the white-washed church with its rosy red-tiled roof on which a flock of white doves cooed and preened themselves in the sun. A peripatetic market — rows of stout little donkeys, their bulging straw panniers filled with bread and lettuces, and cabbages, and oranges, figs and straw hats for which Almogia is famous. We strolled about between the picket lines and shopped from donkey to donkey.

Before us, straight and severe, towered the Sierra de Abdalajis. Its grim, grey stone outlines filled our eyes long before we came to the tiny hamlet with the

sonorous name — Villanueva de la Concepción — which crouched at its feet. A solicitous *carabinero* halted us for papers while a score of small boys tumbled out of the house doors and swarmed about us.

The papers were returned with a bow. "Antequera?" we asked, waving toward the road which struck steeply up the side wall of the sierra.

The *carabinero* nodded. Then his eyebrows went up. "*Un coche Ford*?" he demanded.

"*Si.*"

He shook his head, expressing doubt. Even the small boys looked suddenly grave. All eyes turned to the mountain, then back to Ximena and us at its foot.

The Sierra de Abdalajis, it was implied, was not for *coches* Fords and strange *señoras*, however correct their papers.

The heads were still shaking as we started the ascent.

"If we have mountains like this at home," said the Good Sport presently, "at least we know enough to go around, not over them."

Ximena was a fly crawling up a sun-baked stone wall, tacking across its knobby surface in a series of sharp, hairpin twists. Up and up. The speedometer registered one kilometer, then two. The water in the radiator boiled and steamed. We stopped at a turn, put a stone under the wheels, and broke open the luggage to get out the first receptacle to hand — it chanced to be a lovely, pale green bowl bought from the potter on the bridge of Lorca — how long ago? Then we investigated a trickle of muddy water that traced a tiny runnel down the mountain's face. We dipped up bowlfuls and replenished Ximena till the steaming stopped. Then, on again, up and up, one kilometer and a half, and we

IN THE TOWN GARDEN OF THE CONDE DE LAS TORRES DE SANCHEZDALP

THE PALACE OF THE CONDE DE LAS TORRES DE SANCHEZDALP

stood cleanly on the thin peak of the great stone wall.

There was a house there. The household crowded to the door — four or five shy-eyed children and a wistful young mother with the new baby at her breast. There was, too, an old woman, gnarled and twisted like a scrub oak which has fought for life on a bleak, windswept hillside, and her son, the father of the family — a heroic pine tree of a man, fully six feet tall, proud and reticent and aloof, as are those whose lives are lived on great heights, and have the world of men at their feet. He stood with us, silent and unembarrassed, as we looked out over the tossing sea of lesser green peaks to the dim blue calm of the Mediterranean thirty miles away. He waved his hand across the prospect proprietorially.

Antequera was once famous for its brigands, but its ancient ferocity was tamed to prosaicness. We dropped down the long northern slope of the sierra into its dusty, unimaginative streets where long lines of donkeys stood idly while their owners curled up under the plane trees of the Alameda enjoying the *siesta*. A little beyond the town, rises the Rock of the Lovers, from whose summit Christian knight and Moorish maiden leaped to death together rather than be separated. A pious cross marks the spot where they fell. Southey, who made his fruitful journey across Andalusia in 1796 has immortalized them in ballad.

We had come out on the wide *vega* of Andalusia, "elevated, vast and very fertile," Strabo reported it. The generous bread basket of Spain, rich in wheat and olive groves, in which stand white-walled *haciendas*. Neither fence nor hedge breaks the rolling expanse save along the highroad where hedges of aloe and agave keep

the road in place, and yield their prickly leaves to be fodder for the oxen which plough the fields. These, we had been told, are sometimes yoked in lines of twenty and thirty driven by mounted men who use a long, steel pointed lance like that of the *picadors* to guide the beasts. But the ploughing is done in October and November. On this April day we had miles of green wheat blades, ruffled to silver in the wind, and along the road's edge carpets of low, pale blue Spanish iris — millions of iris blooms.

At Estepa, a brown town piled high to its tall, peaked church, with the road sweeping generously around the base of its hill, we stopped at a roadside *bodega* for a glass of wine. The shop was kept by two women. One very old, wrinkled and puckered, was the color of a russet apple. She sat almost helpless on her low stool. Life had retreated into her eyes. The young woman, her granddaughter, was as beautiful as a ripe fruit. She drew the wine for us from a great tun that filled one end of the cave. It was cloudy purple, and slightly astringent with a delicious musky fragrance.

When we went back to the car, the girl went with us. She touched the wheel and the cushions with quick, birdlike gestures. Where had we come from, where were we going? Seville she had heard of, and Antequera she knew. Malaga lay a long way over the mountains. The *Norte América* — she shook her head doubtfully, and her eyes clouded. We might as well have come from the other side of the moon.

After our adventures in the Sierras, the long white road over the *vega* lacked interest. We kept our eyes on the dropping sun, pushing Ximena to keep pace with him and bring us to Seville by nightfall. The last

long glory was reddening the towers of Alcalá de Guadaira when we ran up the slope and in at its crumbling gates, and then dropped down again and across a bridge over a narrow muddy stream . . .

"A noble stream, and called the Guadalquivir," the Good Sport quoted, and reminded me that Byron made the name rhyme conveniently with river.

The ancient red-walled fortress guards the upper reaches of the stream. It was the birthplace of the seaman Rodriguez Bermejo, who first sighted land from the deck of Columbus' caravel. Alcalá "*de Panaderos*," it is sometimes called, "of the bakers." Flour of the *vega* is ground in its mills built here by the Moors, and the bread for Seville is baked in the great yawning ovens and driven into town in the panniers of long lines of trotting donkeys. As we sped down the well-paved Roman road toward Seville through an avenue of eucalyptus trees, we met the bakers' boys coming homeward seated triumphantly above their empty sacks.

A blur on the western horizon against the departing sun, the shaggy outlines of trees, like an oasis in the treeless *vega*, domes and roofs, the lace work of grey stone flying buttresses upholding the second greatest church in Christendom, and beside it, rising tall and queenly and almond pink in the sunset, the Giralda. The changing loveliness of its bells came to us on the evening air — Sevilla.

There was a plump and important little policeman at the entering in of the city. He stopped us, and demanded papers. Spreading the *carnets* in the light of the headlamps, he studied gravely every stamp and seal and flourishing signature. Then he came close. His eyes were troubled.

"From France?" he asked, pointing to the stamp for which we had paid dearly at La Junquera.

We nodded.

"And alone? Two *señoras?* On the *carreteras* of Spain?"

"Yes." We nodded to all three questions.

He threw wide both hands in a gesture of despair, then as quickly, crossed himself.

"God be praised. Go in peace, *señoras.*"

And so blessed, we entered into Seville.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

WE SET UP HOUSEKEEPING IN SEVILLE

BARCELONA is *hermosa*, Valencia *muy bonita*, Granada *simpática*, but Seville . . . Seville is *preciosa*.

And if you have been born in the south with the soft, slurring speech of Andalusia on your tongue and the smouldering fires of Andalusia in your eyes, and the *corazón andaluz* in your breast, you will press your fingers fervently to your lips, then fling them outward, throwing the resultant kiss in the direction of the Giralda . . . so . . . *PRECIOSA!*

In color, Seville is a warm, old ivory, the color of the fading orange blossoms that drop from the trees along her streets. Their romantic, heavy sweetness is appropriate for she is the city of Don Juan. Not alone he, whose memory lingers in the Caridad whose founder, Don Miguel de Mañara, is reputed to have been the original of Tirzo de Moliño's Don Juan, but of those many threadbare but no less gallant *caballeros* in their long capes with ends flung back to show the tarnished green or crimson linings, who lounge picturesquely under the palms of the Plaza San Fernando to ogle the women as they pass, and compliment them on their beauty. This practice which is common throughout Spain, is not only countenanced but encouraged in Seville. The *sevillana* who walks to Mass without

drawing one "*guapa*," "*hermosa*," or the more subtle "*simpática*," goes home, it is said, and looks into her mirror and hangs her head for shame.

And in the soft dusk of a Spring night, if one walks the narrow, ill-lighted streets of the Santa Cruz quarter, the oldest, most secluded, most truly Sevillian *barrio* of the city, one may turn a corner to find a youth sighing at a *reja*, and through the grille a white hand reaching him a carnation. Plucking the turkey, as the saying goes.

Here at last is the Spain of the guitars and the painted fans, the Spain of the *mantilla* and the tall tortoise shell comb, and the clinking castenets, and the click of high wooden heels painted scarlet, stamping out the measure of the *sevillana*.

That dance, at once languorous and impassioned, barbaric and proud and cruel, in which lives the union of Moor and gypsy, breathes the spirit of *El Andaluz*. The dancers stand tense, their arms are curved high above their heads, awaiting the signal. It comes — the quick plucking of guitars, the rattle of castenets in the hands of the women who sit in a semicircle behind the dancers — the hoarse "*Olé! Olé!*"

With a sharp staccato of heels they are off in a swirl of purple and magenta skirts — a whirlwind in the fuchsias. The musicians bend furiously over their guitars; faster click the castenets, faster and faster, a woman bursts into sudden shrill song:

Son tus labios dos cortinas
de terciepelo carmesí
entre cortina y cortina
estoy esperando el sí.

"Your lips are two curtains of crimson velvet — between curtain and curtain, I await your Yes."

"*Olé! Olé!*" cry the others. The dance ends in a shout.

But despite the strain of wildness and cruelty which is inherent in the Andalusian temperament, Seville is essentially feminine. Not by mere chance has she taken for her patron the ivory virgin which Ferdinand, saint and king, bore victoriously on his saddle horn. It stands now above his velvet-shrouded coffin in the cathedral — the lady of Seville.

We have set up light housekeeping in lodgings — two rooms and a roof — in a tall house close to the bridge to Triana. From one window we have the masts and funnels of the shipping in the muddy Guadalquivir, with the white and ruddy jumble of Triana behind them. Triana — where the *gitanos* live and the best bull fighters come from; where are the famous potteries in squalid, ill-paved streets with narrow gutters running down the middle in lieu of sewers. One looks through the open doors at the potters turning their wheels, painting the damp clay in the same patterns of blue arabesques that were designed by Arab workmen when the commission for the tiles for the royal Alcazar was first given out.

We go there searching for plates and bowls of a perfect moss green — such as were made here long ago. The potter shakes his head. He points to shelves of blue and orange plaques and jardinières with heads of Minerva, and the Virgin, and famous *toreros*. Foreigners like those, he says. We have brought a plate with us, one of eight discovered in San Feliú — in color

it is the green of moss beside a brook, the edges are fluted delicately like petals. The potter's eyes gleam. Foreigners' taste to the contrary, he sees its beauty — "I will make them for you," he says. "They shall be as like this as may be, but more lovely."

And he does.

Housekeeping in Seville partakes of the romantic. For there is Señorita María Luise. It is her house. We suppose there is a *señor papa* somewhere, for we get whiffs of his *cigarrillo* in the evenings, but we do not see him. And there is, too, a plump and smiling aunt who seems to labor under the delusion that we are deaf mutes, for she converses with us in signs, and is so confused by our *castellano* that she runs from us quickly, calling María Luise.

But it is María Luise who is the *padrona*; who comes smiling to answer our ring at the bell; who brings us a nosegay of orange blossoms for our table; who inquires anxiously if the butter is agreeable. It isn't, being tinned. But María Luise's smile is so enchanting, her voice so solicitous, her eagerness to make the *señoras inglesas* happy so apparent, that we lie effusively. Shall America be outdone in courtesy, forsooth?

We go to market with her in the morning — not too early — for Seville does not come awake before nine. With us on the useful tram goes the *muchacha* with the basket to carry home our purchases of fish, and red pepper, and oil, and those sanguinary portions of the anatomy of young lambs and kids which are so unpleasingly evident in Spanish markets. María Luise wears her third best *mantilla*, she assures us, and a comb of no importance, but they set off her vivid young loveliness as no other head dress in the world can do. She has

IN THE COURT OF ORANGES OF THE MESQUITA, CORDOVA

CORDOVA'S MARKET — POTTERY FOR SALE

A FOUNTAIN IN WHITE-WALLED CORDOVA

that charm which is most highly prized by the Andalusians — "*sal*" — salt.

Why it should be necessary to go to market does not at first appear. All morning there is a steady procession of donkeys with laden panniers trotting over the bridge from Triana bringing the day's provisions to the city. Surely it were as simple to stand on the corner and bargain from the pannier.

But the women of Seville go into the streets very seldom, and only for definite errands — to market or to Mass. And María Luise is avidly social.

In the Sierpes, the Street of the Serpents, one takes the pulse of Seville as in the Rambla of Barcelona one is vividly aware of the Catalan life stream. The narrow street, paved from shop front to shop front, through which no wheeled traffic may pass, and which is protected from the fierce summer sun by awnings stretched across it from roof to roof, is one of the unique streets of the world. The *sevillanos'* day is not complete without a stroll here. Nor is this to be entered upon hastily. He must savor it slowly, reflectively, must lose himself in its changing life.

On this Saturday before Palm Sunday, the shop windows are filled with fans — festal fans but with a religious significance, for the approaching Holy Week. They are painted with views of the favorite *pasos*, attended by masked *penitentes* and languishing *señoritas*. Here are *caramelos* wrapped in papers which have colored pictures of the various confraternities and prayers printed on the inside wrapping; dolls dressed to represent the same brotherhoods, and combs, and rosaries, and paste earrings, and crucifixes, and embroidered shawls and *mantillas*.

The Sierpes does not wake before eleven. It is thronged from that hour until one, when all Seville goes home to lunch heavily, and to sleep as heavily after its *paella*. Four brings the second awakening, and from then until two A.M., when the cafés end their programs, the Sierpes is full of life. In one of its *flamenco* cafés not so long ago one could hear Raquel Meller for a peseta. And other singers, destined who knows for what success in Madrid and Paris and Buenos Aires and New York, delight the crowds of heavy Andalusians in their high-crowned, straight-brimmed hats and short jackets.

Don Pedro is still king of Seville. St. Ferdinand and the wise Alfonso, whose crocodile hangs dustily over a side door of the cathedral, are historical personages for guide books and conscientious tourists. But Pedro, the Cruel or the Just — Seville has never quite decided which — and the beautiful María de Padilla live on in the Alcazar. Their love, illicit and blood-stained, is somehow typical of *El Andaluz*. When María died, her broken hearted lover gave her a queen's burial in the Capilla Real where he rests now at her side.

The Alcazar of the old Moorish kings is shut away from the city by its high ochre-colored wall. The square before its gates is usually deserted except for cabmen waiting for tourists to come out. But around the corner where the wall skirts the Santa Cruz quarter and the Murillo gardens, the flowers tumble over the crumbling battlements, and soldiers and nursemaids stroll about, happily hand in hand.

The palace, itself, seen after the Alhambra is disappointing. The rich, painted stucco ornament is over-

bright, the gold untarnished, the lustre of the tiles too glittering. It has been restored and restored. All the kings of Castile have lived here since Ferdinand captured the city. Only Philip II never seemed quite at home in its languorous surroundings.

Charles V was married here in the Hall of Ambassadors, to the pure-faced Isabella, whose portrait by Titian is the one intelligent lady in the Prado. One likes to think that it was while the painter was at work on this portrait that the emperor picked up his brush for him, saying that even an emperor might serve so great a master.

The gardens, which were Moorish at the start, a pleasaunce of palms and orange trees and fountains and running water brooks, did not escape Charles V's heavy Italian hand. He built the grottoes and the stone arcades after those in the gardens of the d'Estes and Gonzagas. But nature and the Andalusian sun have made the oranges and myrtles to flourish, have sent the roses to twining the shaggy trunks of the date palms whence they hang in sweet, flowery cascades above one's head, have spread the wisterias over the stone walls of Charles' building, luring millions of bees and butterflies to feast on its nectar.

The spirit of María Padilla dwells in the gardens. It was her habit to bathe in the mossy water tank among fresh-pulled jasmine flowers, while Don Pedro's courtiers begged the honor of drinking the water of her ablutions.

Seville is the city of gardens. Through the iron grilles one catches glimpses of patios with blue-tiled fountains and beds of violas and cinerarias, with wisteria creeping upward to the roof. The graciously propor-

tioned white house with the upper arcade so typical of the houses of Andalusia, which now belongs to the de Sotos, and once sheltered St. Theresa, and her first community in Seville, has a noble patio surrounded by an arcade with magnificent oaken doors leading into the various rooms. Great carved chests and chairs with heavy leather seats, and dark old paintings furnish the arcade. In the centre is the garden with its fountain.

They live in the grand manner, these grandees of Seville. The houses are duplex, two complete houses under one roof. In summer, the family resorts to the ground floor for coolness, and when winter comes, moves upstairs for the beneficent sun. There are two dining-rooms, two drawing-rooms, two sets of bed chambers.

Sevillian hospitality opened to us the magnificent palace of the Conde de los Torres de Sanchezdalp. The heavily sculptured façade looks down on one of the quiet tree-filled plazas that one comes on again and again throughout the city. The great rooms were rich in priceless brocades and old walnut furniture and paintings, and the garden at the rear had a tiny Moorish bath and bits of antique sculpture.

We noticed with delight a *camelia* covered with yellow satin damask in the state drawing-room.

The patio of the Caridad, founded by the sad, thin-faced Don Miguel de Mañara — could he have been Don Juan? — is filled with roses. It was so when Murillo and Valdes Leal used to walk there with the founder of the charity which had for its object to give Christian burial to evil-doers and law-breakers.

Murillo is the genius of Seville. Velasquez, too, was born here, but the Andalusian spirit seems to have left little imprint on him. Murillo's skies are those of *El*

Andulaz, his cherubs and infant Jesus and St. Johns are the chubby-faced babies who tumble about the streets, the faces of his madonnas look at you from under black *mantillas* in market place and in the churches.

In the art gallery, which fills the magnificent old palace once a convent, the Murillos hang in glory. Many of the finest of these were painted for the Capuchins who befriended him. Here is the Madonna of the Napkin, so called because of the story that it was painted on the *fraile cocinero's* dish cloth. Unfortunately for one's credence in this legend, but fortunately for the preservation of the painting, the background is plainly canvas, not humble household linen.

The painter died in Seville, but the exact site of his grave was lost. One is glad of this, fearful of the monument that would otherwise trouble his memory. Better that this should be kept green in the Murillo gardens, where the Sevillians stroll under the trees among the hedges of pink roses.

Behind the cathedral and the Giralda, and nearly opposite to the Archbishop's palace, there is a narrow opening. It looks like a private passage of no more interest than a hundred others in this city of twists and turns and unexpected corners. But if one persists in following down its narrow throat and makes the right turnings, one comes suddenly into a tiny, paved courtyard that is enclosed on all sides. Sleepy, white houses look down on it, and through a gap in the wall one has a sudden, surprising vista of the Giralda. Borrow lived in one of these houses. Here he wrote part of his *Bible in Spain*, and sighed over the wilfulness of the Anda-

lusians who would neither read his tracts nor buy his Bibles. One pictures him starting out each day on his favorite walk across the plaza and in at the rear door of the cathedral to pass slowly — let us trust, not too disapprovingly — down its south aisle to look at his beloved Guardian Angel over the altar beside the great west door.

There is a whitewashed cross in the centre of the courtyard set about with potted plants, and occasionally one finds a tiny tight nosegay left at the foot. It is one of the Sevillian May crosses that during that month are set up in every patio of rich and poor alike, and festooned with flowers. In the last week of April, the children go through the streets begging alms — "*por la cruz de Mayo, señorita.*" With the money they buy flowers and colored paper of which to fashion even more exotic blooms, and these they use to decorate the Cross of May. Then on Sundays and on Thursdays throughout the month, there is feasting and music and dancing in the courtyards before the crosses.

Pagan — perhaps. Seville was Roman before she was Moorish, and Iberian first of all. Not long ago the archbishop issued a proclamation. The May crosses were permitted only so long as no tangos or fox-trots were danced before them. The Church approves the *sevillana* as it does the delicate minuet of the Seises danced by the choir boys on the steps before the high altar on Corpus Christi Day. Surely one of the quaintest, most touching survivals of an earlier form of worship.

Our roof is by far the most appreciated part of our lodgings. It is, by the way, a true *azotea*, a flat terrace bounded by a broad parapet. The market has provided

us with pots of stock and carnations, and María Luise lends a hibiscus in a tub.

One may sit in a deck chair in the pure, southern sun and look across other roofs to the grey stone filigree of the cathedral roofs and buttresses, and watch the pigeons flying in and out, and the shadows move across the rosy face of the Giralda. Nor is one's delight in the great tower's noble proportions the less for knowing that its architect was that same Arab Gever who invented algebra and gave his name . . . in two separate forms . . . to the tower and the science.

There are many things to be seen from our roof, things that happen unknown to the passers-by below.

For Seville, true daughter of Islam, lives on its roofs. On the street level one is but dimly conscious of the life that is going on overhead. The roofs are gardens, and the gardens the living-room of the family. The secretive, white houses break forth into blossoms and singing.

Next to us, across a narrow alley, is the city prison. A dirty, down-at-the-heels sort of place with wistful faces staring out into the street between iron bars. The prison roof flutters with washing, hung out by two white-coiffed nuns. Every afternoon the wives of the prisoners come to chat with them through the bars. The women's hands pass in pieces of bread, oranges, cheese — the children are held up to be kissed.

A squad of soldiers loiter about the prison door. They stumble to attention when an officer comes by, but at other times they roll their *cigarrillos* and flirt with the women who pass, and tease the crowd of small children who hover about.

These show an absorbed interest in the comings and

goings of *les inglesas*. One afternoon, five of them surrounded us on the front steps. Four were passably respectable as to garments and cleanliness, the fifth was a diminutive Andalusian edition of Huckleberry Finn. His one garment was a man's coat tattered and sleeveless. Through its holes, one saw the dirt-encrusted, ill fed body. His hair was long about his eyes, his face had not known soap or water for many a day. His voice was the hoarse whine of the professional beggar.

The children gathered around us, and pointed to the waif. They lifted the flapping coat to expose his nakedness to the pity of *les inglesas*. They shook their heads and pointed to the purse in my hand.

I produced a two peseta piece, and all the eyes brightened. The waif ceased his whine, put out his hand. But Carmencita, aged eight, was before him. It was she who appropriated the florin; she who took him by the arm in the manner of a District Visitor. She would, she assured me, take him to the barber. He should have a bath and a hair cut.

"And a handkerchief!" I insisted.

Carmencita agreed.

The waif was marched off by the competent Carmencita, while the others followed.

An hour later, our bell rings. There is Carmencita and the three, and a bathed and shorn and sanctified waif.

"*Pañuelo!*" says Carmencita in the tone of a sergeant major.

The waif flaunts a large white handkerchief with a gesture.

Everyone is delighted. We compliment each other

THE ROMAN BRIDGE OVER THE GUADALQUIVIR, AT CORDOVA

THE PUERTA DEL PERDON OF THE GREAT MOSQUE OF CORDOVA

warmly. Fortunately, there is a basket of medlars, . . . that fruit so beloved of young Spain that at the mere mention of the word "*níspero*," small faces break into smiles . . . and the Good Sport's purse yields a "fat dog" apiece . . . two for the waif by common consent.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

SEMANA SANTA

TO SPEND Holy Week in Seville is to brush away five centuries. Time is not a matter of chronological measurement, but of mood and emotion. And the mood of Seville in that pageant-filled week before Easter is pure fifteenth century.

Other Spanish cities — Malaga, for instance, and Murcia, and Madrid — keep the week with picturesque solemnity; but in pomp and magnificance, Seville outshines them all.

The ceremonies centre about the cathedral. As day succeeds day, and one goes there again and again, lifting the worn, leather curtain of the Sagrario door, and stepping cautiously over the uneven paving of the greatest church in Spain, and the second in all Christendom, it is to find each time a different scene being enacted before the violet-draped altar. The mighty stone piers of the nave are hung with falls of crimson velvet — the merchants of Seville gave them centuries ago in gratitude for the wealth that the new trade with the Indies brought to their coffers. Crimson velvet and purple silk; priests in cloth of gold copes moving along the aisles attended by acolytes in scarlet and white lace. The bloom of myriads of candles, voices of unseen choristers chanting the music of Esclava who once was choir master here. Hundreds of pilgrims; peasants

from Aragon and Navarre and the Asturias, in black head kerchiefs and black aprons over their stout woolen gowns; *Madrileñas* in smart hats from Paris and glittering ear rings; French, German, American, English and Dutch tourists with betraying Baedeckers, not open now — even the loquacious Karl is hushed before reality. All are here for the *semana santa.*

One day, we chanced upon a strange ceremony. A group of priests stood on the steps before the high altar and waved a great banner. The standard passed from hand to hand along the line, the silken folds fluttered and unfurled in time to the music, like a rhythmic dance. Again, it was the Cardinal, proceeding from the sacristy through lanes of devout children of the Church who crowded about him, bending the knee to kiss the ring upon his finger.

The Giralda's bells wakened us early on the morning of Palm Sunday. Their glad rejoicings filled all Seville. The city was early awake and astir, early for her, who on ordinary mornings does not rouse before nine o'clock.

The blessing of the palms takes place before the High Mass. We stood in the sunshine to watch the procession of choir, and canons, and priests, and last of all the cardinal himself in cloth of gold, bearing branches of palm and grey green olive, sweep out from the great western door, onto the broad stone terrace that runs around the cathedral. Here were those bleached palm fronds we had seen gathered in the groves of Elche. Many had been decorated by the fingers of nuns and charity school children, twisted and fluted and curled

into rosettes, and strung with silver bells. One such went from the ceremony to be placed over the door of Santa Teresa's house, there to hang, warding away the lightning until another Palm Sunday.

The procession swept around the base of the Giralda while the bells pealed in triumph, and the clouds of incense rolled upward from the swinging censers, and the voices of men and boys sang on the morning air the story of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. We waited with a thousand other spectators in the Court of Oranges for the procession to return. The Court of Oranges has neither pomp nor romance. Its orange trees are withered and gnarled; the grass is worn by the feet of the children who play there, and its ecclesiastical precincts are invaded by a whitewashed cottage for the gardener with a grape vine in a tub, and a pot of geraniums and a fat cat on the window sill, and several rosy babies on the doorstep. The doves, started by the pealing of the bells, flutter about the roofs and come to rest at last on the rim of the stone fountain basin, that was Visigothic before it was Moorish, and only Christian by forcible conversion.

The procession, with the crucifer in the lead, sweeps through the deep horseshoe arch of the Gate of Pardon where once Mohammed's faithful came to prayer. The choir passes within the cathedral; their voices come out to us faintly. The group of clergy in the courtyard beside the fountain answer antiphonally, verse for verse. The April breeze flutters golden copes and lace surplices. It sends clouds of incense smoke whirling upward. The crucifer strikes the foot of the cross on the door, which is opened from within, and priests and deacons and canons, and finally the cardinal, bent

under the weight of his gold mitre, pass within the cathedral out of our sight. Five minutes later, the rise of organ and voices tells us that the Palm Sunday Mass has begun.

All day the streets wear their holiday air. A stand has been erected behind the City Hall and hung with banners of velvet and brocade. Thousands of chairs are set in rows through the streets, leaving between them only a space wide enough for the passage of the *pasos*.

We have seats on a balcony at the corner of the Calle Canovas del Castillo. We can see from them not only the opening of the Sierpes whence the processions will emerge into the plaza behind the City Hall, where each *paso* halts before the mayor's stand, before coming toward and past us; but, craning our necks, we can see as well the steps of the cathedral and the door through which each *paso* is carried into the great church up the shadowy aisle, past the high Altar, and out at a rear door. Whence it is taken by back streets to its own parish church.

The balcony gives us, too, the advantage of the crowd. This, as six-thirty and the hour for the coming of the first *paso* approaches, grows denser and more colorful. Every chair is occupied. Through the ranks pass the water sellers with their clay jars and the ring of cups dangling from their leather girdles, the sellers of ham rolls, and toasted almonds, and *caramelos*, and hawkers of cold boiled *langoustinas* from the harbor of Cadiz, and potato chips, and the sugary *rosquillas*. The hawkers' cries mingle in a song, through which the ceaseless, shrill whine of the water seller threads a leitmotif, "*Agua-a-a! Agua-a-a!*"

There is also a merchant of red balloons who is very popular with the crowd. The balloons bob gaily all along the rows of chairs. A sudden gust of wind — it is April — a carelessly loosened hand, and the cluster of balloons escapes from the owner and rises above our heads. A cry goes up from the crowd. The balloon merchant, staring forlornly up into the air, is the centre of everyone's sympathetic interest. A score of voices offer suggestions. The errant balloons have become entangled in the maze of wires overhead where they hang like a cluster of scarlet grapes just out of reach. A pole is brought, but it is not long enough. A chair is brought and the balloon merchant stands on it reaching vainly with the pole. Then, from a house opposite, a table is lowered from an upper window. A dozen eager hands carry it into the middle of the street. The chair is set on it, and the balloon man is about to mount this precarious height, when, from the Sierpes sounds the first silver trumpet.

The procession is coming.

A policeman, who until now, has stood with the rest commiserating the balloon seller, hustles him out of the way. The table and chair are returned to their owners, the balloon seller retires to the sidelines, his eyes on his lost wares, his mouth muttering imprecations. The balloons bob inconsequentially overhead while the aweful figures of the Passion are borne through the crowd. When each *paso* passes, the crowd's interest in them revives to last for a moment until the coming of the trumpeters heralding a new *paso*.

But now no one notices. All eyes are turned to the opening of the Street of the Serpents.

The procession's six horsemen ride abreast; their

horses step gallantly, caracoling to the music of the silver trumpets blown by the riders. One gauntleted hand holds the reins to the saddle horn, the other the trumpet with its square of fluttering brocade. Their uniform is that of the King's Guard.

The crowd, close-packed in the square before the Captain General's reviewing stand, is loth to stand back. The horsemen clear a way through the people with difficulty. Behind them come the first of the Brotherhoods in long, white robes and tall, peaked velvet caps from which a mask with only two holes for the eyes to look through, falls to the girdle.

They walk in silence, two and two, the width of the street between them. Their sandled feet shuffle on the cobblestones. Many are barefoot, an act of penance, and all carry tall, lighted candles, resting the ends in a socket attached to their leathern girdles, while the flames flicker and drip hot wax at the edge of the line of spectators. The *Confredias* of Seville are the descendants of the mediæval guilds. Many of them date from the fifteenth century. The garb is alike for all, but each Brotherhood has its own colors. Sometimes the gown is white, sometimes black, with tall hat, mask and sash of blue or green or crimson velvet.

Ten, twenty, fifty *penitentes* in white robes and black caps, then a soft blur of lights against the dusk — the first *paso*. It emerges from the narrow Sierpes, and advances slowly — oh, so slowly, across the plaza.

Falls of purple velvet conceal the bearers, but with the shuffling steps they take, the figures on the great carved and gilded wooden stage quiver and sway, and become startlingly lifelike.

Before the *paso* march men with banners, a crucifer

attended by acolytes swinging censers. Clouds of incense rise in heavy waves about the figure of the Crucified. Just behind it comes the parish priest and a long line of penitents — women in heavy mourning carrying candles, and members of the masked *confredias*. Many of these are barefoot. More than one bears a heavy wooden cross on his back.

There is the roll of muffled drumbeats, the murmur of prayers, the solemn tramp of hundreds of marching feet.

As the *paso* approaches, a hush falls on the crowd. All rise, the men remove their hats, the women bow their heads. A countrywoman lifts her child high in her arms. "Look," she cries, "*Querida mía, está el Señor.*"

And from the lips of an unseen singer somewhere far down the dusky street, there rises sharp and high and shrill a *saeta*:

[1] "Dios perdono a Magdalena
viendo lo mucho que amo.
si amor me lleva al pecado
puedo esperar el perdon."

Only the girl from Chicago who sits at the end of our balcony leans forward over the balustrade and smiles cynically. She flicks the ashes of her cigarette on the heads of those below. The English lady who sits next me, and the German lady beyond the Good Sport, gasp in unison and exchange glances across us, "American!"

Alas!

[1] God pardoned the Magdalene
Because she loved greatly.
If love can remit my sins,
Then may I, too, hope for pardon.

The *paso* moves slowly — oh so slowly! Every two hundred feet it must be set down, while the bearers thrust their heads from beneath the velvet hangings and hold out their hands for cups of water. Meanwhile the lamplighter, who marches with his ladder slung across his back, seizes the opportunity to run up his steps and trim the lamps and candles.

Then, at a signal, the marshal lifts the tiny bronze knocker at the front of the *paso*. Three hollow strokes reverberate. The bearers raise the stage, and once again this representation of the Son of Man moves through the lines of silent and reverent Sevillians on to the Cathedral.

Then, immediately, with the passing of the *paso*, the mood of the crowd changes. Solemnity gives way to a carnival gaiety. The water sellers and vendors or *langoustinas* and toasted almonds cry their wares; groups visit back and forth; the young men parade up and down the line, frankly admiring the pretty girls; children are kissed and nursed and pranced about; the red balloons bob merrily; there is the rushing, full-throated surge of laughter and Andalusian talk until again, from the throat of the Sierpes, a second trumpet call gives warning of the approach of another *paso*.

And this, too, is Spain. This April changeableness; this quick right-about-face; this union of passionate solemnity and a gaiety no less impassioned. There is nothing remote in the Spaniard's attitude toward religion. Mystic, yes. One remembers that of this mood came Theresa and John of the Cross and El Greco. But the selfsame mood gave birth to Cervantes and Lope de Vega of the thousand comedies.

The mood which Palm Sunday has established

mounts through the days that follow in a crescendo of emotion. Each evening there are processions — hundreds, thousands of the Brotherhoods marching silently beside the *pasos*. No *paso* is carried more than once. Each church in the city contributes two or more. One's ears are filled with the blare of silver trumpets, the roll of drums, the steady unhurrying shuffle of sandaled feet on the cobblestones.

Coming to our balcony by a maze of black streets, we passed on one of these nights a *paso* borne silently back to its parish church. There in the narrow canyon of a street, unlighted but for the nimbus of candle flames about the figure of the Virgin, and the long yellow tapers of the attendant *Confredia*, we flattened ourselves against the house wall that these might pass. The long, pearl-sewn train of the Virgin swept us, the pink roses and stocks and violets beneath her feet filled the street with perfume.

How wonderful they are — these figures with their amazing wardrobes of velvet gowns, their diadems sparkling with jewels that once adorned the queens of Castile and Navarre. They are Woman. Woman in every phase of her destiny — serene, triumphant, beneficent, piteous, not alone the Queen of Heaven, "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," but the Mater Dolorosa whose heart is pierced by seven silver swords.[1]

[1] According to legend, that is the origin of the *saeta*. The word means "arrow", but it is used for the short, impassioned songs of devotion that seem spontaneous, but are often traditional, as this, addressed to the Virgin Mary:

Seven arrows of silver
Have pierced thy heart.
Hark; From the blood which flows
Are born seven songs!

GUADALUPE — THE SQUARE BEFORE THE MONASTERY

IN LITTLE TRAVELLED ESTREMADURA

THE GREAT MONASTERY OF GUADALUPE

Most beloved of all, *la Macarena*, patron of the bull fighters, is brought from her church in the Macarena quarter in the small hours of Good Friday and borne through the streets while the *sevillana* in the balconies drop flowers on the cloth of gold canopy above her head.

Only second to her is *la Esperanza*, from Triana, our Lady of Hope. The gypsy folk march beside her, for she is theirs. And, in the dawn of Good Friday, on the return journey, *la Esperanza* is carried under the windows of the city prison that the captives may hail her with *saetas* and thrust their hands through the bars to touch, for good luck, the hem of her robe.

When we came out into the Plaza San Fernando on Thursday morning, it was as though we stepped into a well of silence. We rubbed our eyes. Gone were the row of waiting victorias, the coachmen in faded livery with the wisteria blooms behind their ears, and their quick eye for *touristas*. Gone were the loitering Don Juans. Even the *gitanas* with nosegays of carnations and orange blossoms, and their importunate brown fingers and swirl of pink and magenta skirts, were suddenly subdued.

"Why?" we asked the doorman.

"Because our Lord is dead," he replied.

So all that day and the next, Seville kept the silence. The Giralda's bells hung voiceless. No wheeled traffic, no trams, moved in the streets surrounding the cathedral. But hundreds of black-clad, black-veiled women and girls went from church to church, and knelt before the great temporary altar that was set up in the cathedral nave.

They are very beautiful, these girls of Seville. One does not see them except during the *semana santa* and the *féria* when the strict rules that govern the women of *El Andaluz* are relaxed. But at these times they walk in the streets, demure under their tall combs and the falls of black lace — but not too demure.

We went early, a full hour early yet not a minute too soon, to find seats for the Thursday's chief ceremony when the Cardinal Bishop washes the feet of thirteen old men who are chosen from the city's alms houses.

They came, stepping awkwardly in their new, neat black clothes, down the steps of the High Altar to take their places on the platform which had been erected between the sanctuary and the choir. Each old man wore a clean bath towel over his right shoulder.

Presently, while the organ rolled and the choir sang the story of Christ's humbling himself before the apostles, came the Cardinal, attended by his deacons. The ewer was brought and the great silver basin. Each old man removed the shoe from his right foot, and the Cardinal bathed and dried it, kneeling. He kissed it, before placing a coin in the withered old hand.

All day on Thursday the number of pilgrims has been increasing. There are not beds enough in all Seville to keep them. The sofas in the hotel lounges will be called on to-night, between dinner at ten and the start of the second and greatest of all the processions at two in the morning.

The streets which seemed thronged on the other days are now close packed. The balconies and roofs are lined with spectators. Seville has joined hands with Jerusalem — "whither the tribes go up."

We leave our balcony before the close of the first procession to edge our way into the cathedral. We want to see the *pasos* carried in, set down a moment before the temporary altar with its myriad silver lamps and candles, its white and gilded pinnacles, and then borne down the dusky aisles and out at the door which is just below the Giralda.

A thousand other pilgrims have had the same idea. The great Gothic church is no longer too great. Its aisles have become thronged thoroughfares. It is the mediæval market place, pulsing with life. On the steps of its chapels weary country folk without the price of a *semana santa's* night's lodging, find a dozing place. Servant girls stroll about arm in arm. Two have made the muffler of one of them serve as a head covering for both.

A *paso* is borne in. The blur of its candles illumines the shadowy bay. Presently, it is carried, swaying, down the long, long aisle. Its lights grow faint and misty like the Pleiades.

Perhaps — yes, I am sure, this is best of all.

When we come out, we find that it is raining. A steady, merciless downpour that has sent the crowds scurrying for shelter. The patio of the Inglaterra is crowded beyond all possibility of comfort. We edge our way in to dinner. Our waiter (he comes from Avila, the home of Santa Teresa, as he has told us, and he is no less than the brother of the *mecánico* at the garage who has Ximena in charge, which gives us a relationship) has saved a corner and food for us. Though he is called first here, then there, he has a moment to pull out the Good Sport's chair, to inquire if we found that evening's procession particularly fine.

"*Sí, sí, sí,*" we assure him, having with us still that scene in the cathedral. He beams.

"I was there," he says. "I am of the *Confredia* of the bakers. We marched tonight."

The rain kept up without a break. There could be no early morning procession. *La Macarena* and *la Esperanza* had to wait until afternoon.

From the balcony of la Señora McLeod we watched the Lady of Triana make her triumphal procession across the bridge from Trajan's city. Crowds of gypsy folk came with her. The platform under her feet was piled deep with roses and mimosa. The *gitanas* who marched at her side, wore the same flowers in their hair. At the bridge head, a great crowd stood waiting to receive her. The *Confredia* which was to escort her was one of the oldest and most honorable.

Then, as we watched, three masked figures emerged from the portico of the long white house directly opposite to us. All three wore the white robes of the *Confredia*; all three were masked completely, but one wore the tall pointed cap of black velvet of the order, while the others had their heads bound with veils of black.

"The two are the Infanta and her lady-in-waiting," said Señora McLeod. "The Infanta is the cousin of *el Rey*, and the wife of the Captain General of Seville. And she is an honorary member of the *Confredia* which is composed of officers and the nobility. She has lent her jewels — the jewels of the Bourbons — to the Virgin of Triana for the day. She and her lady will march behind *la Esperanza*."

The Giralda's bells again. They wakened us on Saturday, pealing gladly the message of the Resurrec-

THE BRIDGE OF ALCANTARA OVER THE TAGUS

THE PATIO OF THE HOUSE OF EL GRECO, TOLEDO

WHERE CERVANTES LODGED — THE POSADA DEL SANGRE, TOLEDO

tion. For Spain, being Spain, does not wait for Sunday to begin its Easter.

On Saturday morning, the great white veil which has concealed the High Altar is rent in twain to the crash of organ music and the bronze jubilee of the Giralda's bells. The coachmen are back in their places; there are pink roses behind the horses' ears; the trains jangle; the orange sellers ride their donkeys gaily down the streets; the baker's boy cries the excellence of his loaves from Alcalá.

María Luise stands before her mirror trying on her white *mantilla*. Trying first a red carnation, then a yellow rose against its folds. She has new earrings of glittering paste. Her shawl of very old corn-colored silk embroidered with fuchsias and passion flowers lies in readiness on the bed.

"For the Easter *corrida de toros*," she tells us with a sparkling smile.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE LOST CALIPHATE

(Carmona to Cordova)

FROM the gardened hillside that covers the ancient Necropolis of Carmona, we looked across the rolling *vega* of *el Andaluz* to distant Seville.

It was the afternoon of Easter, and all Seville, including several thousand foreign visitors, and as many fortunate ones from the villages round about as could secure seats, were compressed in a frantically cheering holiday crowd at the greatest bull fight of the year.

Only we, it seemed, on that day had preferred the open road.

Carmona lies some twenty miles from Seville along the road to Cordova. Once this was the pilgrims' way. Hundreds of thousands of the Prophet's faithful came from Fez and Morocco and Algiers, journeying to the great mosque of Cordova. It was the dream of Abd-er-Rahman, builder of the mosque, that it should rival Mecca. The road from the sea was marked by guest houses and baths for the refreshment of pilgrims. All these are gone now. The empire of the Caliphs is a legend, one more tale told by Scheherazade to her lord. If the patient asses who trudge along the ancient highway, their panniers stuffed with grain for the mills built by the Moors at Ecija and still grinding, see a

company of white-burnoosed figures moving before them, their faces set toward Cordova, they are grown wise since Balaam's time and make no sign.

We passed few villages, and these few were dispirited hamlets of two opposing lines of adobe huts. The good paved road stopped short of each one, not to begin again until the last house was passed. The stretch between was deeply rutted and muddy. An open sewer ran along it on either side, and the approach to each house door was over a tiny arched bridge. They are very unprepossessing, these flat-roofed, flat-fronted villages of Andalusia, each one with its ponderous church and forlorn sun-baked plaza with a high sounding name — Plaza de los Reyes Católicos, Plaza Ponce de Leon. They have none of the picturesqueness that marks the hill villages of the north.

The population is made up of women and children; hundreds of children, each with but a single abbreviated garment, and that in tatters. But through the rents, one saw beautifully moulded olive-brown chubby limbs, the cherubs of Murillo's canvases.

The men of the families work in the wheat fields where, still keeping to the agricultural system ordained by Rome, they live in huts, and return to the villages only on feast days.

Between Seville and Carmona, the *vega* rolled in limitless green waves, broken here and there by high stony crests. These long ridges, known as *alcores*, were the site of Roman villas . . . in the days of Trajan and Augustus when the flour of the *vega* was shipped to the Eternal City. Few of these have been excavated. The ploughshare turns up fragments of porphery columns, tiles, bits of sculpture and pottery . . . of shapes and

sizes still to be seen in every village potter's shed in Andalusia, and vessels of delicate glass turned opalescent from their long burial.

But the great treasure of the *vega* is still unearthed. Any one of a hundred rocky mounds where the goats graze, and the cacti sprout along the crevasses may yield a marble goddess as lovely as the Lady of Elche.

The proud white towers of Carmona shone against the blue sky for several miles before we drove into its sun-baked Alameda where a few struggling trees promised more than they could fulfill. The purity of its walls told that it had newly emerged from the brush of the Spring whitewashing. This municipal ordinance is for sanitation more than for beauty. As all the water these southern towns have during the summer is rain water collected in cisterns, a liberal quantity of lime applied to the house walls acts as a filtering agent.

Carmona stands high, commanding the *vega*. The great Cæsar spoke approvingly of its impregnability.

Its pride is symbolized in its arms. We saw these carved on the face of the town hall . . . a star surrounded by castles. Underneath was a motto in Latin . . . "As Lucifer shone in the dawn, so Carmona glitters in Vandalia."

Through a ruddy gateway that seemed almost a fortress of itself and had mediæval quarterings above its Moorish horseshoe arch, we drove into a smaller plaza on which balconied houses looked down. At tables set about under the orange trees the men of Carmona drank their *aguardientes*.

All wore the stiff, broad-brimmed, high-crowned hats of Andalusia, and short close-fitting jackets. They and the women who leaned over the balconies, one or two

with vivid shawls over the habitual bourgeois black, were like an opera setting. One expected them suddenly, at the lift of the baton of an unseen director, to burst into song.

Instead, they eyed us, aloof and disdainful. Only the small boys forsook their Andalusian pride to crowd about Ximena. We asked them the way to the Necropolis. Either the word was strange to them, or our pronunciation of it stranger, for they failed to understand. We tried again, but without success. It was the Good Sport who had the happy inspiration:

"Where are the dead Romans?" she inquired in the tone of an Ollendorf professor.

The dead Romans were understandable. A chorus of voices directed us. With two small boys on each running board, and twenty trotting alongside, we wound through the streets to the hill at the town's edge where the citizens of ancient Carmo lie. The tombs are cut into the side of the hill. They are square burial chambers with painted walls on which traces of the antique coloring are still visible. Shelves recessed into the wall held the funeral urns. Many, many of these stand there still, and in the little museum which the owner and excavator of the site, Mr. George Bonsor, has erected. A callous guardian lifts the lids to expose — for a peseta — all that remains of what was once brave and fair. It is a museum of the dead. We saw clay and bronze toys designed to amuse the departed on his journey, urns and jars for ashes, tear bottles, and delicate mirrors and vanity cases, which were placed in the tombs that the lovely ladies might still be lovely when they encountered Pluto at the Gates of Tartarus.

By far the most interesting feature of these burial

places were the dining chambers where the relatives gathered on occasions to feast in honor of the dead. Bits of stone couches and tables still stand. In the vestibule of the most imposing tomb, a niche was prepared for the ashes of the family servitor.

The garden of iris and lilies under blossoming fruit trees, which covers the crown of the burial hill was so lovely that we lingered there in the sunset.

Carmona, when we returned within its gates seeking our *fonda*, was warmly alive. The music of guitars sounded from the cafés, the click of castanets and shrill nasal singing.

The Easter fiesta lasted until long after midnight, then, with dawn, the men went back to the fields.

We drove out by the Gate of Marchena, past an ancient, whitewashed church once a mosque, as its tiny, neglected Court of Oranges and tall tower proclaimed. On a column in its portico is carved the oldest Vizigothic calendar in Spain . . . a list of holidays observed in the year 470.

Beyond the gate rose the ruined red walls of the Alcazar guarding the approach from the north. The road dropped steeply down the hill to the green *vega*. Before us stretched a sea of wheat fields, and grey-leaved olive groves away to the Sierra Morena which forms the wall between Andalusia and Castile. Behind us, Carmona rose high and scornful on its hill.

There was nothing to mark the lonely miles but the needle of our speedometer, and at long intervals a couple of horsemen. They sat high on their heavy, silver-mounted saddles. Each had a long-barrelled gun slung from his saddle horn.

At La Luisiana we stopped for gasoline. The village had a neat, thrifty air. There were surprising little gardens before some of the houses. Charles III, one of the best and least commented upon kings of Spain, settled the village with Germans he induced to immigrate to Andalusia.

The country between La Luisiana and Ecija was sterile desert. Clumps of aloes and cacti struggled for existence there. The road ran a lighter streak across it. Our wheels churned up the dust in heavy clouds. Already, though it was only April, the cacti and prickly pears were heavily encrusted with grey dust.

Ecija was vividly white and blue with whitewashed walls and church towers faced with blue *azulejos*. The market still loitered in the square, and the tawny canvas awnings spread above the stalls, the piles of cabbages, oranges and artichokes, the garlands of dried red peppers, made an unforgettable picture.

Because the Good Sport cannot forego the charms of a market, we strolled about among the stalls. For many weeks it had been our dream to find a white clay water jar such as we had seen in the possession of a traveller out of Spain. It was shaped like a porpoise, with rounded mouth and swelling sides, and a tail curved coyly over its back to serve for a handle. That particular water jar had come from Majorca. We had searched the potteries there in vain. But still the hope of finding one somewhere lingered. "Perhaps in Valencia," we said, and then, "or in Lorca," "or Triana," and now, "in Ecija."

It would seem to be a part of the law of compensation that when one fails in one quest Fate shall put into one's hand a substituted delight. It was not the porpoise water bottle we found in Ecija — that still remains un-

attained — but two clay toys, a *picador* in stiff hat and arms well akimbo astride a tall steed, and a bull with spreading horns and fiery nostrils.

Both were mottled blue and white with a fine high glaze. And both, placed to one's lips, gave forth piercing whistles. Toys of similar design are found in the excavations of Roman towns throughout Andalusia.

Ecija's claim to fame is as the birthplace of a band of bandits called fondly "The Seven Children of Ecija." Their exploits are told in countless ballads, in which they appear in the noble proportions of Robin Hood.

An old custom takes the women of these villages into the fields on April 24th, St. Mark's Day, and each woman ties a knot in a stalk of growing mustard to ensure her husband being faithful.

At Ecija we crossed the Genil. How far away Granada seemed! Yet, measuring the flow of the waters, the red walls of the Alhambra were nearer here than at Seville.

The lassitude of sunfilled noon seized us.

With a straight, uneventful road, shadeless and white, threading the *vega*, Ximena seemed to go of herself. Far ahead, rose a ridge of dark hills. Beyond the first of these lay Cordova, capital of the Lost Caliphate.

We had our first view of the City of the Caliphs from the top of the long ridge. It lay white and silent in the embrace of the sleepy Guadalquivir.

Against the jumble of glistening white roofs the ochre-colored calls of the *mesquita* with the baroque cathedral rising arrogantly from its midst, struck a softened note out of the past.

How gladly the pilgrims must have viewed it from the same height and girded themselves for the descend-

ing leagues and over the long bridge of Calahorra . . . old even then, for its foundation stones were laid by the Romans . . . straight to the gate and the shaded Court of Oranges with its cooling fountains and whispering trees.

Men were driving great tawny oxen out on to the wide sandy shoals to drink, while the women washed along the brink, and spread the blue garments on the stones to dry. The massive ochre-colored Calahorra, which guards the bridge head from the South, was the outpost of Cordova's defenses.

We drove slowly across the long span. It is seven hundred and thirty feet from shore to shore. A line of pack asses, crowded close to the parapet, and the driver of a cart whipped his beasts into one of the square embrasures to let us pass.

Cordova, like Cadiz, has kept faith with its Moorish past. Its streets turn sharply between high white walls, over which almond and orange trees drop petals on the heads of passers-by.

Through open gateways we caught glimpses of wide courtyards, cobblestoned and set about with tubs of hibiscus and oleanders. More than one had a stone well with a wellhead of wrought iron that was twined round with yellow roses. These patios were not elegant and studied like those we had glimpsed in the Santa Cruz *barrio* of Seville. Rather they were intimate and homely, in which the washing and the goats lived on friendly terms with the family and the roses.

The houses are low, only two stories high, and many of them of one story like the *kasbah* of Algiers. All have flat roofs where the women of Cordova, continuing the Moorish tradition, sit in the evening. Unconsciously

one's eye searches for the domes and slender minarets that once broke the dead level of the roof lines. In the days of Abd-er-Rahman the Great, the city numbered one million; there were three hundred mosques, and nine thousand baths.

"A proportion of churches and baths sadly reversed since the Conquest!" said the Good Sport.

Cordova's ancient leather industry was lost with the expulsion of the *mudejar* workmen. What a lot Philip III, *el Piodoso*, has to answer for! The Castilians were too proud and too lazy to carry on the art. Pieces of Cordova leather are worth more than their weight in gold today. The other craft of the city, that of the silversmith, still flourishes, however. The shop windows were full of necklaces and earrings of gold and silver filigree.

We paused to admire an ancient palace on a steep street . . . a palace that had a deep upper arcade with a wooden ceiling, and a massive sculptured doorway in which hung tall oaken doors studded with iron nails, and a wall fountain that served the neighborhood. It had long since fallen from its proud estate and was a tenement. A girl and a soldier leaned romantically from one casement. She was a *gitana* type, deep bosomed and sloe-eyed. She twirled a carnation flower between her teeth. We waved to them, and with a gesture the soldier pulled the flower from between her lips and tossed it to us.

Granada and Cordova complete the tale of the Moors in Spain . . . Granada the pleasure palace, and Cordova the city of the soul. A solemnity still broods over the white city of the Gaudalquivir. Its music is not the

castanets of the gypsy girls, but the high-pitched cry of the muezzin. And as the Alhambra is the high climax of Granada, so the mosque of Abd-er-Rahman guards the soul and spirit of the Lost Caliphate.

The yellow outer wall with its almost impromptu decoration in which appear carvings, mosaics, tiles, used it would seem without set design or preconceived plan but as each occurred to the fancy of the builder or lay to his hand, is beautiful with the beauty that belongs to growing things. Its height varies from thirty to sixty-five feet, and with the heavy buttresses and towers it resembles a fortress. Three gates of gilded bronze lead into the inner Court of Oranges. We stopped on the threshold to examine two Roman milestones set into the wall. Once they marked off the leagues on the road to Gades.

The Court of Oranges is more than five hundred feet in length. Around it runs a deep colonnade used now for cathedral offices, and as a lounging place for the Cordovese. Children play on the stones, and women pass and repass filling their red *cántaros* at the five stone fountains, or stop to gossip under the orange trees.

The trees themselves are planted in nineteen rows to continue the aisles of columns within the mosque. Now the openings between the aisles are walled, and the only entrance is through the Gate of Palms added by a Christian king of Castile. But in the days of Abd-er-Rahman, the aisles stood open. The number of the faithful filled the mosque itself and overflowed into the Court, where they stood in their white robes, and bowed in prayer between the trees.

I was unprepared for the *mesquita* . . . for its vast space broken only by the forest of columns. When one

enters a Gothic cathedral one expects a sense of spiritual elation born of the upward springing lines, the high pointed arches, the delicate stone tracery thrown like a veil over the piers and buttresses. But the Mosque of Abd-er-Rahman, having none of these, has still achieved a dignity that surpasses all the shrines of Christendom.

Yet, it would seem to have been built casually, even hastily. The columns — eight hundred and sixty of them remain — were brought from ruined Roman temples and churches and palaces throughout Spain. They are in every color and design . . . red, yellow, cream, grey, white . . . covered with worn stone tracery or plain, thin and thick. Their capitals are Phœnician, Roman, Vizigothic . . . what you will. Those that stood too high were shortened summarily and their bases concealed by a hideous wooden flooring.

Despite the architectural discrepancies, despite the arrogant baroque church which overzealous hands set down in the midst of the mosque, its glory remains. The cathedral is a puerile gesture which Mahoud is too proud to recognize. As for taking affront . . . was it not Al-Mansur, noble chamberlain of the great Abd-er-Rahman, who decreed Sunday a day of rest out of respect to the Christians dwelling within his borders?

Here, and there, spaces have been walled up as mihrabs, holy places not entered even by the Faithful. The walls of these shrines glitter with mosaics and lustre tiles. That of the Great Mirab, holy of holies, is painted in vermillion and gold and blue. Its columns are of alabaster, its ceiling is carved like a shell from a single block of marble.

Here, in a pulpit made of ivory and sandalwood and ebony, plantain, aloe and citron wood, bound with

golden clasps and set with jewels, the Koran was kept.

The larchwood ceiling above the two tiers of red and white arches was coffered and painted vermillion and gold. Three hundred chandeliers hung from it, and eight thousand lamps cast from the bells carried off in triumph from the shrine of St. James at Campostela.

Of Abd-er-Rahman's University nothing remains, nor of the library of thirty thousand volumes, in each of which the Caliph had written with his own hand the title and name of the author.

Indeed, books would seem to be out of favor in Cordova today. We went in search of something to read, and the bookseller who told me proudly he had English books, brought his whole stock from a dusty shelf. There were three . . . a copy of Mother Goose, an illustrated edition of Lamb's Tales, and a novel, "Mr. Wilbraham," by an author who hid herself modestly behind the nom de plume "Violet."

From our hotel garden we could look across to the mountain side where Abd-er-Rahman built his pleasure palace for the beautiful Az-Zahra.

The tale of it reads like one of the Arabian Nights. Twenty-five years were consumed in the building. Ten thousand mules were used to transport the building materials. Then it rose white and fairy-like against the dark mountain. "Like a maiden in the embrace of an Ethiopian," said Az-Zahra when she viewed it. The words may have roused some jealousy in the Caliph, for he ordered the mountain removed. When the impracticality of this was pointed out to him, he contented himself with uprooting all the dark growth of the mountain side and replanting it in grey leaved olives and figs and almond trees.

Not a stone remains of Az-Zahra's palace. A hermitage kept by dour-faced monks stands on the site.

But Abd-er-Rahman's sovereignty remains. It is of him sleepy Cordova dreams. She has forgotten Rome. Castile passed over her like a wave and receded.

Even Isabella's Gran Capitán for whom his native city has named its newest, broadest thoroughfare seems to belong less here than to Granada where he died in exile.

It is Abd-er-Rahman and the wise Al-Mansur one expects to meet in the ruined garden of the Alcazar where Roderick the Goth had his earlier palace. Az-Zahra's eyes look out through the *reja* in the Calle Alcántara.

When the great Caliph was dead, they found among his papers one on which he had listed those days in his life when he was completely happy. And the number of them was fourteen!

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE SILVER ROAD THROUGH ESTREMADURA

CADIZ," said Amicis, "is the word 'white' written with a white pencil on blue paper."

We had spent a day in the Spanish Venice while the *Manuel Arnus* lay to in the harbor where Essex sank the silver fleet of Castile. In those canyons of streets where the tall, narrow houses crowd each other for a foothold on the tiny islet, we had our first taste of Spain.

Viewed from the sea, the successor to ancient Gades is a glittering silver mass floating on blue waters. It occupies a narrow spit of land which curves around a wide lagoon, in shape like a gigantic, barbed fishhook. Its domes which seem more mosque than church, its white bulk threaded by dark passageways, the whine of the fish sellers, the tiny shops that are no more than shallow hollowings in the house walls where the merchant, his head bound turban-wise with a black kerchief, sits cross-legged among his *chorizos* and sacks of sweet red pepper, all these would make it seem a bit of Africa that has floated across the straits where the chugging little steamer goes to Tangier.

Cadiz is reputed to be the oldest city in Europe, older even than Toledo. It was the port of that mighty Tarshish whose ships came to Solomon every three years "bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks."

In the pagan world, its salt fish and its dancing girls were luxuries equally prized. St. Paul is said to have preached there in the old cathedral, a tottering sun-burnt pile which seemed to our nostrils not to have been aired since the apostle's visit. The street sign Calle Count O'Reilly brought memories of Charles Lever's soldier heroes who found the señoritas of Cadiz more devastating than the bullets of the French.

Today, there is little gaiety in Cadiz. Its streets are closely shuttered and silent as the *kasbah* of Tangiers. Black-veiled women passed silently close to the white house walls. True, their black was not the modesty of Islam, but the interminable mourning of Spain. At sight of foreigners they caught one end of the long veil across their faces and stared at us apathetically across the *yashmak*.

It was here that Murillo met the accident that caused his death. In the Church of the Capuchins a fat and sociable *padre* showed us the altar piece on which the artist was working when the scaffolding fell. Squinting a little, the *padre* asked if we could not discern, just there, a too hasty brush stroke, a dragging blur . . . the last signature of the Master of the Immaculate Conceptions.

This church had over a side altar what is surely the daintiest, most *ingenue* Virgin in the world — a celestial shepherdess in a Watteau frock of pink silk and lace sewn with rosebuds, and a drooping, flower-wreathed hat. In her arms she carried a woolly lamb about whose head shone a tiny nimbus.

The *padre* took us into his tiny arbor in a sheltered corner between the church and sacristy. A fig tree spread its branches above it, and the ripe figs hung dark and plump within easy reach of one's hand.

In bidding farewell to Andalusia, we were to turn northward from Seville by the ancient Silver Road through Estremadura.

The Real Automóvil Club of Andalusia advised this route to Madrid rather than that which runs through Cordova and La Mancha to Castile. Our membership in the Automobile Club of America made us guest members of the friendly Spanish Association, and we had their kind offices in each large city. There was, we were told, an inn at Trujillo in Estremadura maintained in part by the Club, where one lodged as well as anywhere in Spain. Trujillo is the halfway station between Madrid and Seville. The distance there from Seville was a long day's run for Ximena . . . one hundred and eighty miles.

We made an early start. María Luise, and the aunt, and the *muchacha*, staggering under the nine pieces of luggage but waving away any suggestions of a porter, saw us off from the doorstep with many wavings. Two gypsy girls just over the bridge for the day's adventures were with difficulty kept from accompanying us. Carmencita and her followers called loud farewells, and the guards at the prison gave us a faint cheer.

After crossing the bridge to Triana, the road followed the west bank of the Guadalquivir through dreary Santiponce. An enormous monastery at the town's edge was built by Guzman, *el Bueno*, the Spartan hero of Tarifa. He is buried in the village church. There, too, is the tomb of the virtuous Doña Urraca Osorio, who refused King Pedro's amorous advances, and was ordered burned alive for her coldness. A small head which appears humbly in the marble carvings at the feet of the effigy is that of Doña Urraca's serving maid

who threw herself into the flames in an excess of loyalty. In these days of "servant problems" the statue seemed a scant recompense for so great fidelity.

A few miles beyond Santiponce we passed the site of ancient Italica. There is little left of Scipio Africanus' city but the great amphitheatre with its subterranean cells for wild beasts, and tiers of stone seats where the lizards were sunning themselves.

The road left the river there, and began to wind into higher country bearing to the west. On either side stretched stony uplands that were snowed over with the great white flowers of the gum cistus growing among the dark scrub oaks.

Beside the gum cistus and thickets of wild white roses, were hillsides overgrown with wild lavender. The highlands for as far as the eye could see were spread with purple like a king's mantle. Beside the road grew irises and purple campanulas, and blue gentians. A symphony of blues and purples played against the grey rocks and twisted grey trunks and leathery foliage of the *encinas*.

In those proud-pied steppes there seemed no one but us. The Guide listed only seven villages before Almendralejo, and these were for the main, crossroad *ventas*.

We were travelling one of the great trade routes of Rome. Each bridge we crossed was of stout Roman building. The silver mined in the province of Huelva was carried by this route to the crossroads of Astorga, and thence eastward to Zaragoza and Tarragona, and so to the Eternal City. Centuries later, when the silver fleets from Peru anchored in Cadiz Bay, their precious freight went northward by the same route to fill the coffers and cover the altars of Castile.

Pizarro and de Soto and stout Cortez, setting out to seek fortunes in the New World, had followed this winding road down to the sea with empty pockets, and rode up it again rich and powerful. Stony Estremadura is the home of the *conquistadores*.

One thing puzzled us. At each dip of the road where an *arroyo* was to be crossed, a narrow trail led off to one side down the steep slope to a ford beside the bridge. At the point where this left the highroad was, in every instance, a signboard with the word "*CAÑADA*."

On the horizon, walking through a field of purple blossom, appeared a shepherd walking on short wooden stilts. His legs were encased in flapping leather "chaps," and his body in a black and white woolen *manta*. Before him, in the field of lavender, grazed his flock.

We knew him for one of the itinerant shepherds who drive the sheep of Castile down through Estremadura to pasture all winter in the plains between Seville and Cadiz. With the coming of spring, the northward trek begins. More than one million fleeces move over the highlands. The sign *CAÑADA* . . . meaning a sheep trail . . . is for their guidance, so that the slow movements of the flocks shall not block the bridges.

Mediæval laws of *La Mesta* still protect these travelling flocks and allow them grazing rights while in transit. And rude mud huts, shaped like beehives, are placed at distances to provide shelter for the shepherds.

We had made thoughtful provision of lunch and stopped to picnic in the lee of some rocks close to the road. The wind from the northwest was searching and carried the promise of rain. While we heated our soup cubes over a tiny camp kit, a traveller going south drew

up beside us. He was a young Belgian walking beside a small cart drawn by a dog. He informed us modestly that he was walking around the world. We shared our lunch with him and the dog, a sober animal who had, his master said, only scorn for the underfed, hysterical canines of Spain.

We sought information about the roads beyond Trujillo toward Toledo, but there was little to be had of this Belgian. He had not sufficient curiosity to inquire, nor the interest to remember the names of the places through which he had walked. His opinion of Spain was low. The nights on the high plains of Castile were searching cold. Spanish beer was expensive and . . . bottled! Nor were the Spaniards interested in his post card pictures of himself and his dog. His returns had been slight. He was turning hopefully toward the *feria* in Seville where there would be many foreigners. "Americans are the best," he said, and drained the last drop of soup from his cup.

At Almendralejo we stopped for gasoline. Outside the forge next to the garage, the smith was shoeing a bullock. The great beast was slung in chains from a rude wooden frame, with its head held down by a wooden bar laid across the horns. A crowd of drovers in long black and white striped *mantas* stood about.

We could see Mérida long before we came to it, lying on the east shore of the Guadiana and approached by the magnificent arches of the Emperor Augustus' bridge. Greening pastures spread away from the low river banks and the up-piled brown city. Beside the bridge head rose the embattled walls of the ancient Alcazar . . . later a hospital of the Knights of Santiago

who held the mastership of the city after the expulsion of the Moors in 1228. In its courtyard was a Vizigothic well with steps leading down to the water.

Mérida is rich in Roman remains, and little else. Its streets were the muddiest and the drabbest we had traversed.

The *Travesía* sign pointed us northward over another Roman bridge across the tiny Albarregas which flows into the Guadiana just north of the city by the Roman reservoir still called the Baths of Persephone.

Grey and stony and bleak, Estremadura stretched away to the mountains on the west that are the border of Portugal, and to the eastern Sierras which rim Castile. Herds of black swine grazed beyond each village under the care of the village herd. Just so Pizarro tended the swine of Trujillo, and was beaten by his masters for letting the animals stray while he questioned travellers along the road about the new world overseas. The hams of Estremadura have been famous among epicures since Saint-Simon discovered their delicate sweet flavor, due, so he declared, to the swine having fed on vipers. The sheep dogs . . . big, fierce, snarling beasts . . . had collars bristling with nails to ward off attacks of winter wolves.

The villages, few and far between, were of stone with steep roofs of orange and dull red tiles vividly lichened, roofs on which the storks nested and stood stiffly on the ridge poles staring sleepily at nothing. Heavy stones were placed along the edge of the roofs to weight them down against the winds.

Gone were the flat façaded, secretive houses of Andalusia and the eastern shore. These cottages had square, deep windows like watchful eyes, and doorways recessed

under curving porches with a stone settle on either side the double "Dutch" door.

At Miajades, the old women sat before the house doors spinning. Their orange head kerchiefs and orange-dyed shawls against the grey stone walls echoed the lichens on the roofs. Most of them were barefoot, and the faces of all were seamed and lined, weathered by the passing of the seasons. The tall distaffs with the balls of grey flax twirled swiftly in their hands, even as they ran out to the road's edge toward us.

Among peasant races, it is the very young and the very old who are beautiful. The middle-aged are bowed under the grinding necessity of wresting a living from the soil. The children have not yet glimpsed this . . . even the youthful Pizarros have their travellers' tales and accept their beatings with philosophic fortitude. But from the very old the burden has passed. Theirs to sit by the house doors and tend the *chicos* while their daughters and daughters-in-law work in the fields; to take the goat for its afternoon walk; to spin and knit with an eye to the silk worms and for all that passes along the road, and an ear stretched for gossip to be regaled later with authority to the household.

These spinners of Miajades were no exception. When we stopped, eager to photograph them, they crowded around us plying us with questions. So, too, alas, did all the children of the village! It was impossible to catch the women alone.

In vain, they and we shooed the children. These only crowded closer. More came and more . . . until there were at least forty of them. One of the old women caught me by the arm and drew me into the cottage. Four others followed close while two were

left to guard the door. The house, little and low-ceiled like a Mother Goose dwelling, gave through a rear door on a green meadow. A brook ran gaily close to the house walls. We jumped the brook, the five spinners and I, and they posed for me in the sunny meadow, twirling their distaffs proudly. The shutter clicked, only just in time, for with a wild whoop of discovery, the children who had run to the end of the cottage row and around it into the meadow bore down on us in a wild stampede.

The old women cheered them derisively.

They showed me with pride the heavy, homespun, hand woven linen of the flax which grew at their doors.

I stopped to admire the neatness of the cottage. It had an immaculate cleanliness that would have shamed many a New England housewife. The furniture, as in most Spanish houses, consisted of chairs, which were set primly around the wall. Cooking bowls of red-brown earthenware stood on the floor beside the tiny, hooded fireplace. And on the chimney wall hung a wrought iron frame of fine, simple design . . . from which depended the iron tongs, ladle, fork and spoon.

The grim Sierra of Guadalupe rose menacing on our right as we ran through the village of Santa Cruz. It had a cobblestoned plaza before a church with a deep portico upheld by heavy round columns.

A girl rode into the plaza toward us. She sat sideways on the haunches of the burro, and her bare feet kicked it into a trot. An orange-dyed head kerchief bound her young brows in the manner made familiar by Guido Reni's Beatrice Cenci. Her apron was the same glowing hue, and crossed over her breast was a shawl

of fine wool. It had a black ground sprinkled with small red and yellow dots.

The women of Santa Cruz were drawing water at the fountain. They carried the dripping red *cántaros* on their heads. Elsewhere in Spain, water is carried on the hip. But in Estremadura the jar goes atop the owner's head, the uneven bottom resting on a pad of a tightly coiled strip of cloth. The group about the fountain flamed with yellow and orange shawls and kerchiefs . . . all colored by a local dye, as the juice of the mulberry tints the clothing of the Valencian peasants.

Trujillo on its hill caught the last rays of the sinking sun. Its old yellow walls and crumbling palaces . . . part Roman, part Moorish . . . flamed in the sunset. The dying day gave back to them a last moment of their one time glory. Tattered small boys were herding the swine up the hill along a tree-lined avenue to the town gate. The cracked bell of some church rang warningly.

We scattered the homing swine before us as we drove through the fringe of modern town to the Hotel La Cubana which stands high in a cobblestoned street. Our arrival at its doors, coincident with the coming of two other Americans motoring down from Madrid to Seville, threw the proprietor into a perspiration. It was with difficulty that he sorted us, and our clamor for rooms, beds, baths and very hot tea into the demands of two separate parties for whom two intimately connecting *matrimonios* would not serve.

Thanks to the careful providing of the Real Automóvil Club, Ximena had a little plaster cubicle to her-

self in the courtyard, and held her own between a Rolls Royce attended by a London chauffeur, and a glittering, long-nosed Hispana-Suiza, of whom we suspected the elegant ducal personage we saw at dinner.

He was exquisitely, sublimely bored. Behind him hung a backdrop of Deauville and Biarritz, and the casinos of San Sebastian. He was attended by a sympathetic valet, and close under his hand at all times, even in the dining-room, was a magnificent borzoi. Our waiter bent confidentially to whisper that the gentleman was the Duque de M—, mentioning a name that conjured up chapters of the history of Castile. Always on his way to Seville he stopped at La Cubana, and always the white borzoi accompanied him. Next morning, looking from our window, we saw the Duque walk across the cobblestoned inn-yard to his car; the beautiful dog stepped delicately beside him, keeping her head where the fingers of his drooping hand touched it with a careless caress. Several steps behind them came the valet bearing a hamper in which were the borzoi's two puppies.

They say Julius Cæsar built Trujillo, and a century and a half later the mighty bridge of Alcántara was set up across the Tagus to carry travellers out of Portugal to its markets.

A network of twisting, cobblestoned streets that here and there break into impatient flights of steps, runs up the side of the hill to the intricate walls and moats and towers of the great Cæsar's fortress. Halfway up, one steps into the wide Plaza Mayor where grey stone palaces of certain citizens of Trujillo who went down the Silver Road to Peru with empty pockets and re-

turned with trains of sumpter mules loaded under the weight of ingots, established themselves after the manner of self-made men of any generation or nation.

Fittingly, it is Pizarro's lusty self, not a wan mystical saint, or portly bishop, or disdainful king who presides over the Square. He rides his great bronze steed from a pedestal close to St. Martin's Church where the sharp-peaked, blue slate roof and tall, open belfry provide nesting places for innumerable storks. On Saturdays, his townsfolk spread their market stalls all about him, and barter their geese and pigs and hams and wool . . . and jingle the good silver in their pockets.

Pizarro's palace with its imposing, heavily sculptured doorway, and the arms granted him by a grateful monarch carved flourishingly above it, fronts on the Square. It has an interesting patio with a gallery stanchioned by rugged stone columns. On a lower level, made possible by the sharp slope of the hillside, is a stable with mangers for fifteen horses.

The one time swineherd understood the grand manner.

A short flight of steps from the plaza brought us to a narrow terrace with a row of white houses that had interesting irregular façades broken by columns and arcades and odd lovely windows worn like a jewel on a Florentine lady's forehead. Higher still rose the ruddy silhouette of the ancient fortress. An old woman lived alone in the most secure portion of the redoubt. We took refuge under the great, curving buttress of the tower from a sudden pelting rain that turned Trujillo's streets into chattering brooks. She came out on an iron balcony above us, and called us to come up the ladder and share her tiny fire. The warmth of the few coals

in the clay pot was grateful, for with the rain had come a bitter north wind. Seville, bathed in sunshine and the scent of orange blossoms seemed a month, not one day distant.

The woman spoke the rough-tongued Estremenan dialect which struck foreign to our ears. Conversation was necessarily limited. She took us out on a broad parapet that was sheltered with a glass roof and fitted as a crude chapel. There, we understood, a priest came occasionally, panting from the climb, to say Mass. It was a pious fancy of the Marqués who owned the citadel. The woman had her lodging in the tumbling old pile, and the privilege of alms in return for tending the shrine.

"Had she children?" we asked. "Nine. Three were dead." She made the sign of the Cross. "And the six who were left?" "Oh," she shrugged. "All were married with many children . . . she could find a bed with any of them, but this was better . . ."

The inheritor of the Cæsars hugged her independence.

Of Trujillo's two ancient churches, both enriched by benefactions of the conquistadors who found final resting places beneath their stones, Santa María Mayor is the more interesting. It has an open, light interior, and a lovely, octagonal singing gallery, rare in Spanish churches. The strong, brown stones of walls and piers are without taint of whitewash or Churrigueresque ornament; Churriguera, who laid violating hands on so many Romanesque and Gothic churches throughout Spain, passed by Trujillo to work horrors on the monastery church of Guadalupe.

A score of poor women knelt on the grass matting

that was spread over the pavement, and two small boys in homespun jackets served the priest. When the final words were said, the two came running down the altar steps to say that the *padre* asked *la señorita* to stay. Presently, the priest came. He was a delightful, cultivated Castilian, immured in this lonely hill town thirty miles from the railway, and linked with Seville and Madrid only by the fast motors that put up at La Cubana over night. His great regret was that so few of those who rode in the motors cared to see the town, or his church.

He showed me the reredos with the pride of a connoisseur. Its wooden panels painted with scenes of the childhood of Christ, were as fresh as when the Flemish artist was imported by the conquistadors in the sixteenth century.

And with humor, the tomb of that Don Diego de Paredes, who is called the Samson of Estremadura for the feats of prodigious strength he did at the conquest of Granada. He could, the *padre* said, stop the sails of a windmill by merely touching his finger to one of them.

"And did he?"

"At least so his townspeople say."

The *padre* understood the historian's art. Though refusing to commit himself, he did not refuse his hearers a good story.

One of the tombstones set in the pavement before the altar over some doughty conquistador of Peru delighted me. On it was carved a tall palm tree bearing not dates but pineapples. Beneath the branches, two pigs stood on their hind legs striving to reach the fruit.

"Not the road to Madrid, *señoras*?"

"Not the road to Madrid."

"Then the road to Seville?"

Neither the road leading back into Andalusia. What we sought was a clear direction to Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

The shrine of Estremadura's Patrona lies high in the Marianica Hills behind the Sierra de Guadalupe, eighty-five kilometers from the main-travelled motor road at Trujillo, and sixty-five from the nearest railway at Oropesa.

We dropped down the eastern side of Trujillo's hill into a rich and sheltered valley. The old conquistadors built their country homes there among almond orchards that flushed rosily in the folds of the hills, and groves of grey olives. Against the high, white wall of one *quinta*, the espaliered apricot trees were in tender bloom. An avenue of Judas trees in rosy-mauve flower led straight to the door. The storm had scattered their petals in a deep carpet over the road.

The grim outlines of the Sierra de Guadalupe sheltered the valley from the west, and to the east and north rose fold on fold of mountains forested with oaks and chestnuts.

The Estremenan village names were at once a fascination and a despair. Conquista was fairly simple and obvious, but Ibahernando, Jaraicejo and Herguijuela, the two last with their misleading g's and j's, put our Castilian to the test.

At Zorita, the road swung northward through a dreary adobe village. Fields of newly sprouted *garbanzos* stretched away on either side to the hills. The way ran straight and muddy through Logrosán, the birthplace in 1616 of the learned Dr. Soropán who wrote

a treatise on Spanish medicine *in verse*, and then started its climb into the hills.

The grey stone, red-roofed houses of Cañamero were set against a rise of chestnut forests. It resembled the villages of Bavaria. The village girls in orange kerchiefs and little, gaily patterned, woolen shawls, strolled three and four abreast, along the road while the young men followed them. Rigorous etiquette forbade either group to address the other, but each was acutely, youthfully aware . . .

Above the forest tops rose still higher, smooth, rounded mountain sides on which pink and purple heather bloomed against a turquoise sky. Beyond the last house, the road dropped sharply to the bottom of a deep ravine where the Guadalupe (River of Wolves) tumbled headlong over great boulders.

It was a well watered mountain land, a surprising contrast to the arid mountains of the east and south, and the barren steppes along the Silver Road. Countless tiny springs pushed from the hillsides. There was the music of water brooks.

Groves of eucalyptus and laurel and deep beechwoods shaded the road which began to mount steeply, following the river to its high source. At regular intervals along it were old, stone benches, placed long ago for the refreshment of pilgrims, and, in a tiny forest clearing, a stone Calvary.

Presently, the ugly jumble of turreted brick and stone walls of the Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe came into view, rising very tall above the huddled roofs of the village.

The monastery church forms one side of the irregular village plaza. Its broad stone terrace is the playground

of children, goats and dogs. The flight of steps serves as a morning market place, and a spot for dozing in the afternoon sun.

Beyond the church stretch the ramble of ugly, unimpressive buildings which form the monastery shrine.

Our pull at the bell rope beside the door which stood open according to the hospitable rule of St. Francis, brought an old porteress. She shuffled toward us out of the gloom of the corridor which led like a tunnel through the house to a tiny, sun-splashed garden that was sheltered in an angle of the church wall. At our request for hospitality, she bobbed and smiled and beckoned us into the prior's parlor where, she assured us, Padre Martin would soon come to us.

He came, a tall, powerful man in the coarse, brown robes and hempen girdle and sandals of St. Francis. No æsthete like the Hieromynites who were the founders, but cordially human, with an easy flow of French, and, one saw, a gift for life.

We asked timidly if we might stay over night.

But, of course! The porteress would unlock the doors of the old church around the corner, used now as a garage, that we might lodge Ximena in sanctuary. She and the *muchacha* would bring the luggage. Meanwhile, had we lunched?

We had not.

And it was now past two o'clock. Padre Martin shook his head in dismay. We must be famishing. In twenty minutes the *fraile cocinero* would have a lunch ready for us. Meanwhile, he, himself, would show us our room.

We followed his brown habit up steps and along miles of scrubbed and whitewashed corridors. Heavy, hand

hewn timbers of chestnut upheld the plaster walls, and stanchioned odd little galleries and recesses in that great, rambling caravansary. Padre Martin unlocked a door.

It opened on an enormous bedroom in which four beds and four times as many chairs failed to make any impression as furnishings. A single long window gave on a balcony that overhung the plaza.

We were high, six or seven stories above the fountain where the women stood in groups, resting their rosy copper *cántaros* on the brick rim; high above the crowding houses whose upper stories extended beyond the first to be upheld by stone pillars, and make shelters for farm carts and burros.

And all around, higher still, rose the heather-crowned hilltops. The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe lies like a precious egg in a smooth, round nest that is held proudly above the world.

We came back to our balcony again and again. The sharp mountain air brought the sweetness of heather, the sun dropping early at this height suffused the sky with pink and mauve. Far off in the depths of the monastery the vesper bell was ringing. A tatterdemalion figure appeared at the end of the street. It was the village swineherd in flapping, goatskin coat and leather breeches; his legs and feet were bound with rags. He drove before him forty or more gaunt, black swine.

As they and he emerged into the square, he shook his crook and shouted. The swine broke their ranks and separated, each making off without ado to its own home. Two came squealing to the door of a house directly

opposite our balcony. They pushed their snouts against the door, but were unable to open it. Their grunts became squeals, their squeals took on a note of anguish. Presently, a woman leaned far out of an upper window to locate the disturbance. She called reassuringly, and a moment later opened the lower half of the house door. The pigs ran in gratefully, and the door shut after them.

A single star came out over the rim of the purple hill. Guadalupe settled itself for the night.

CHAPTER TWENTY

THE SOUL OF SPAIN

SOMETIME about the year 1329 a peasant of Cáceres lost his cow. For three days he wandered along the Guadalupe seeking the beast, only to find her, after mounting more than one hundred miles into the hills, dead.

The peasant was a careful man. He determined to save at least the hide which was good for breeches and would fetch a useful penny in the market at Trujillo. But no sooner had his knife made the first pious cross in the breast of the dead cow than she rose before him alive and mooing. Nor was this all, for there appeared beside the cow the Virgin Mary herself who bade the astonished peasant lead the beast back to Cáceres, and tell the priest to return with him and to dig on that spot.

The peasant followed her commands. When he returned to Cáceres he found his wife weeping over the body of their son. Immediately he prayed the Virgin to restore the child, by this second miracle establishing the authenticity of the first. His prayer was answered, the child revived, the priest and peasant returned to the mountain valley where their spades upturned a stout chest which proved to contain a small, blackened wooden image of Mary seated on a throne and holding the Child Jesus.

Brother Tomás gave us these bits of history with an

indulgent smile. But Brother Tomás and all the present monks of Guadalupe are Franciscans, and their tenure of the shrine dates only from the beginning of this century. The old Hieronymite order of Guadalupe was disestablished in 1835.

Brother Tomás was appointed to be our host while we were guests of the convent. He was a gentle, slender man in the brown habit of the Assisian, with the ingenuous smile of a child. He led us along miles of corridors and chapels, chapter houses and sacristies big and little, and pointed with simple pride to the weight of gilded and painted stucco ornament, the baroque ceilings and altars, the whole tawdry, tarnished relic of long dead grandeur. To our eyes it all seemed curiously unecclesiastic. Even the great church with its magnificent *reja* had a drawing-room atmosphere . . . a palace, it seemed, for whispering courtiers and periwigged gallants, not a retreat for grave and reverend monks who had turned their backs on the world.

Architecturally, Guadalupe is a jumble of many styles. Its chief jewel is its Mudejar cloister. Two stories of horseshoe arches look down on the garth. They are of brick, plastered over after the pleasant manner of Andalusia. A gentle fountain splashes in a low, tiled basin beside the refectory door, and in the centre of the garth rises a lovely Gothic wellhouse. Its soft rosy color was splashed with mosses, and tufts of rock plants flourished between the finials.

On that April day, the cloister garth was lighted with lilacs. Their pale flames flickered against the whitewashed walls with a Pentecostal glory. The paths leading to the wellhouse were bordered with purple hyacinths, and many grey pots in which grew standard

fuchsias the height of one's shoulder. These were hung with pink and magenta blooms. Brother Tomás lifted one long flower cluster, and let it sway delicately between his fingers . . . "*La pendiente del Virgen*," (the Virgin's earring) he said poetically.

How pleasant to think of this secret garden on days of *fiesta* when the white-robed monks of Guadalupe used to sit within the arcade with their flutes and viols and hautboys making gentle music while others of their company performed the religious dramas for which the Hieronymite order was famed. Cervantes wrote some of these *autos* for them. He was a guest of the convent, as were Columbus, and Cortes bringing the gold of the Montézumas.

Not only were the monks expert musicians; they were skilled artisans as well. They set up a smithy where the copper *cántaros* still in use in the village of Guadalupe were made; and they were devoted to painting and embroidery. Much of Guadalupe's treasure of illuminated missals and embroidered vestments was lost in the years after the disestablishment, but enough remains, gathered into the cases in the refectory, to constitute one of the greatest collections in the world. We stood lost in awe before altar frontals on which scenes from the Gospels were embroidered, with the intricate play of color and form that one finds in exquisite enamels. Copes and dalmatics for all occasions, of velvet and brocade and cloth of gold embroidered with religious emblems and the dearly loved pomegranates of victory bore witness to the regal magnificence of the abbots of Guadalupe. The Empress Isabella made a set of vestments, but her fine stitchery is put to shame by the more elaborate embroidery of the monks.

And Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, the mistress of all this splendor? The little black figure on the revolving throne high above the altar is almost lost under the weight of her cloth of gold robes encrusted with jewels. Behind the niche, and approached by a secret stair, is a circular chamber. Its walls are hung with crimson brocades and panels painted with scenes from the life of the Virgin. An enormous crystal chandelier hangs from the centre of the frescoed ceiling, and all about stand beautifully carved, seventeenth century armchairs as though waiting for chamberlains and courtiers to attend a levee. This is the "boudoir" of the Lady of Guadalupe. Here are kept her wardrobe of many gowns worked with gold and pearls, her earrings, necklaces, brooches, her sceptres, and her three crowns, the finest of which is placed upon her head at her *féria* on September eighth, by the Queen of Spain herself.

A low door gives access to the niche above the altar where the statue stands. We felt a little hesitancy about coming close, but Brother Tomás swung the revolving throne about and motioned us to come near. He held up a lighted taper to show the tiny face framed in the band of priceless pearls. It is a peasant countenance, chubby cheeked and impassive. It has neither the patrician subtilty of the Lady of Montserrat, nor the *corazón* of the Virgins of Andalusia. It is stolid and apathetic — a peasant wife raised to glory.

Yet Columbus named one of the Lesser Antilles in her honor, and queens of Castile have been her tiring women!

They are the real queens of Spain, these sacred images, far more puissant than any women of flesh and blood; nor are they merely historical relics of a dead

credulity. Their cult is as vigorous in the thought of Spain today as the Ku Klux Klan or the Rotary Clubs are in the thought of America.

Nor is this cult limited to the peasant intelligence.

We were not the only guests that night at supper. A fat elderly Marquesa attended by a sallow, wistful-eyed companion supped with the abbot at a little round table, beneath which, we guessed enviously, bloomed a *camelia*. At our long table, where Brother Tomás was host, were four ladies, wives of prosperous Catalan business men, who had come on pilgrimage from Barcelona, a distance of some four hundred miles. They had brought a gift for the Virgin. We had no Castilian to match their flow of speech, and it seemed to us they eyed us American Protestants a little suspiciously. Brother Tomás, as though to make gentle amends, urged the boiled eggs on us. There was a tureen full of them, and the approved method of consumption seemed to be to break them three at a time into a tumbler and drink the very liquid content . . .

There were *churros* for breakfast. Ours were made by the *fraile cocinero*, but a strong smoke of frying overhung the plaza where a village woman had set up her pot of oil over a *brasero* on the church steps. She squirted the thin batter through the ceremonial "gun" into the sputtering fat, to the delight of a ring of hungry-eyed children.

There was too, much clatter of copper *cántaros* about the fountain, and the business of Monday.

We made our farewells to Padre Martin and left our gift with him. Following the rule of St. Francis, the brothers make no charge for bed and lodging. One

gives as one pleases, be it much or little. Nor does anyone inquire your name, nationality, age, estate (married or single) — those questions which had met us at the threshold of every hostelry in Spain. Had we been greater folk than the Marquesa travelling incognito, or criminals fleeing from the law, the sanctuary would have been the same.

Alas, Ximena's sanctuary had not gone unviolated. We had left her in the apparent security of the church —now garage, and the porteress had bolted the doors; but, none the less, hands had been at work among the luggage we had, for once, left with her, The camera was missing. I had my suspicions of the Marquesa's chauffeur, a haughty person in a white rubber coat with stylish blue facings and no regard for *coches Fords*. He stood there and watched our preparations for departure. Gladly would I have bartered the camera for the film that was still in it and which had not alone the picture of the spinners of Miajades, but one of a woman we had encountered far back on the Silver Road, riding her gentle ass and holding a lovely, blond-haired baby in the folds of her shawl, while the proud husband father walked at her side. It was a "Holy Family of the Spanish school."

I regretted our loss intensely as we dropped down the hill and turned for a backward look at the somber turreted pile rising above the roofs of the village. The sharp silhouette with the conical corner towers was reminiscent of a French *cité*. That backward glance, and the flock of black goats that spread across the narrow road and ignored Ximena's warning honks, caused me to forget Padre Martin's parting bit of information . . . that I could get gasoline at the last

cottage. We coasted swiftly down the long hill, the sun was warm and sweet on the heather, exotic blue birds with orange wings fluttered through the eucalyptus groves. We took a sharp turn beside a stone wayside cross, and so came out upon the highroad, not through Cañamero, but past a roadmaker's cottage that had

TOLEDO 193 kms.

painted on its side wall.

I thought then for the first time of the gasoline. "Was there a garage at the next village?" we asked the roadmaker's wife. She shook her head. Then she revived our spirits by adding that if we stopped at the *venta* a few miles further on, something might be done.

The *venta* was a friendly place. An old woman, two men, a middle-aged couple, seven children, three dogs, and a goat burst out of its door to investigate our needs. *Gasolina?* They nodded comprehendingly. We made out that while they did not keep this, there was a factory of some sort in the huddle of cottages across the road, and the factory had gasoline which sometimes the foreman was willing to sell to improvident motorists. Three of the children ran across the road with a clay jar. They came back shortly after, shaking their heads. The factory was sorry, but of gasoline it had none to spare that day.

I thumbed the pages in the Guide for names of villages along the road to Oropesa. To my questions whether there was gasoline to be had at any of these, they shook their heads. The nearest gas station was at Puente del Arzobispo, and the Archbishop's Bridge was sixty kilometers away.

Should we turn back the twenty kilometers we had

THE ROMERIA TO OUR LADY OF THE DEWS

THE WALLS OF AVILA, IN OLD CASTILE

come, to Guadalupe, or take the chance of the road? We flipped a fat dog — tails we go back, heads we go on and trust to our luck. The fat dog barked at us from the dust. We gave the copper to the smallest baby of the seven and went on.

We were entering into the mountains that ring the plateau of New Castile on the west. They rose, abrupt and verdureless, in steep angles of reddish rock.

They were proudly, superbly lonely. The road mounted, ran along the wall of them as along a palisade, so that we looked, shuddering, down on either side into mighty chasms. There was no traffic on that road; we met not one cart or string of pack mules. To be stranded there without gasoline . . . For the twentieth time, I bewailed the ill fortune that led me to use my two tins of reserve stock, carried all the way from Barcelona, only the day before.

In the angles of the red mountain walls were the verdant stripes of olive groves. As we dropped down one slope with a still higher one confronting us, we saw at the edge of a grove a car, and a man seated in it smoking an indolent *cigarrillo*.

We drew up beside him, and explained our plight. He would have shared his reserve tins with us but that his employer, who was the owner of the groves, was on a tour of inspection which might mean an all day's drive. But he took out a notebook and scribbled something on a leaf, if we could get to the next settlement and present it at the large house at the left of the road, they would sell us twenty litres from their private stock.

The large house on the left of the road proved very nearly all there was in the settlement. It was the olive grower's *hacienda*; cottages across the road provided

shelter for his farmers and herdsmen. The door of the main house stood open, and an old woman came out on the doorstep shading her eyes with her hand against the sun. She wore the peasant dress of Toledo, a short, brown woolen skirt reaching just below the knees, and kirtle and apron, and her legs were encased in leggins of white wool embroidered elaborately in red and yellow and green. She took the note and beckoned us to come in. The *hacienda* had one enormous room, the rear part of it lower ceiled than the front. There was the great fireplace with seats beside the hearth and iron hooks for the smoking of hams and bacon, and a rack of guns. On a pile of old blankets before the fire lay two newborn lambs. The shepherd in his leather breeches and black and white plaid, knelt beside them feeding them with a sop of cloth dipped in milk.

We went away the richer for the hospitality, and with twenty litres of gasoline in our tank. It had been nearly empty.

Now we left the mountains behind us to our right. The road ran over highlands and through wide stretches of moor to a tollbridge across a muddy stream . . . the Tagus. A famous Archbishop of Toledo built the bridge, and established a charge for vehicles other than those belonging in his village, the toll to be used for the support of the local almshouses. That was several centuries ago, and since then, with the numbers of motors, the almshouses have prospered beyond the dream of their founder. It is now a serious question what to do with the surplus income but apparently no one has yet thought of lowering the toll!

The village by the Archbishop's Bridge makes red *cántaros* for its living; dozens and dozens of these

were set up along the edge of the road like fat ninepins drying in the noonday sun.

We lunched at the *venta* where we refilled our gasoline tank. We went through the wine shop where groups of potters, their sackcloth aprons smeared with red clay, and some passing drovers who had left their sheep to forage in the plaza stood about, to a cobblestoned court shaded by the largest fig tree we had ever seen. It spread benevolently over the whole yard and we sat on a bench beneath it, and played with two chubby babies, the grandchildren of *la padrona.* They wore no more than our first parents did before the Fall, as they tumbled about in the fig tree's shade with a lazy yellow dog, and some nondescript fowls. Meanwhile *la padrona* and a slatternly daughter with bare brown ankles showing below her magenta petticoat, performed mysterious rites at a tiny stove which was built into a kind of cupboard beside the donkey's stall. The *borricho* thrust his head over the barrier into the courtyard and surveyed us inquiringly.

Presently, there was an *arroz* . . . of a perfection: tender rice grains stewed in oil, and seasoned with fine herbs, and two plump birds inbedded in it. "What are they?" we asked, picking the bones hungrily. *La padrona* smiled widely at our pleasure. "Oh, little birds that sing in the wood," she replied casually.

Were we feasting on nightingales?

An omelet, strong peasant bread and musky purple wine drawn from one of the great tuns in the cellar behind the house, made a repast to make France look to her laurels.

A dull stretch of road brought us through Oropesa to Talavera de la Reina. How that name rings like a battle

cry! The town, which seemed to us incredibly dull, was the marriage portion of the queens of Castile. Pitiful Blanche of Bourbon spent her macabre honeymoon in the castle there. Talavera is chiefly famous for its pottery. One recognizes the ware at once by its blue white ground and the blue and yellow *decor*. The old apothecary jars so dear to the hearts of collectors were usually of Talavera ware which used to be brought into Madrid and sold in an open market along the Calle Alcalá as in Goya's famous tapestry design *el Cacharrero*.

The road to Madrid led straight through the town between the potteries to the north. But we were for Toledo. We turned sharply to the east across the Tagus again, and followed a dusty track across the dispiriting plain of New Castile. The great central plateau of Spain, across which in winter the winds sweep mercilessly, and upon which the summer sun blazes without respite, is treeless and dreary. Far away to the north beyond Madrid one glimpses the curve of the snow wreathed Guadarramas; southward the plain sweeps into La Mancha and up to the dark wall of the Sierra Morena which bounds Andalusia. It is twenty-five hundred feet above sea level.

The Tagus has cut a chasm through the plain. Late in the afternoon we came to the edge of a sharp down. Behind and on three sides of us stretched the olive brown plain. Below us the river coursed. It swept in a great curve embracing on three sides a sudden rocky promontory rising steeply out of the plateau. And atop those rocks, high perched and grim, was a yellow brown city . . . Toledo.

Barcelona is the hands, Madrid the brain, Seville the heart, but Toledo is the soul of Spain. It stands stark and aloof, high-piled above the turgid river. It is incomparably sad. Its walls seem continuations of the steep cliffs on which they are built. They have absorbed the life of generations and generations of men. Surprise is no longer possible to Toledo. It has withdrawn into itself, and broods alone on its rocky isle, and its thoughts are not of today or tomorrow, not of the past, but of eternity.

> What does a day matter? Yesterday waits
> for tomorrow, tomorrow for infinity:
> men of Spain, neither is the past dead,
> nor is tomorrow, nor yesterday written.

Two magnificent Moorish bridges span the Tagus. That of Alcántara with its two arches, one great and one small, is the approach from the east. We, coming from the west, crossed by the longer bridge of San Martin. A fortress-like tower guards the narrow bridge at either shore . . . We looked along the bank on the city side to the ruins of Roderick's castle, and the shoal where the beautiful Florinda bathed. Roderick seeing her, lost his heart and his head, and ultimately his kingdom.

Above us, its yellow walls seeming one with the cliff as though the precipice flowered suddenly into Gothic finials and flamboyant tracery, rose the Convent of San Juan de los Reyes. It was founded by the Catholic Kings for their burial place. The romantic F and Y appear again and again in the carvings with the arms of Castile and Aragon. The north wall of the church is hung with iron fetters struck from Christian captives.

We skirted the base of the city hill to make our entrance through the Moorish Gate of the Sun. Its square, crenallated tower above the beautiful horseshoe arch was golden yellow under the sunset. Just within we halted Ximena on the stone where Babieca, so the story goes, drew up and stood trembling before the portal of a little mosque. And when the Cid dismounted and called his men to break down the wall, in a recess they found a Christian altar and a light that had been burning before it through three centuries of Moslem rule.

The mosque has been restored to its churchhood, "Christ of the Light" is its lovely name . . . but architecturally it seems more Moorish than Christian.

Motors are at a disadvantage in Toledo, where the streets break into unexpected flights of steps or end abruptly in blank walls. We turned a sharp corner and were halted by a high stone barricade. There was a narrow wooden door set between the stones. It was heavily studded with iron bosses, and had a knocker also of wrought iron, shaped like a serpent curled upon itself with its tail in its mouth. Somehow, that ancient symbol of completeness seemed symbolic of the city of the Tagus.

The tall, dark houses lean confidentially across the narrow passageways. They seem to be forever whispering. Below are tiny, dim shops. From the rafters of one of these dangled rows of ghastly wax arms and legs and heads. It dealt in nothing else. Though we knew these to be destined for votive offerings, we were none the less haunted by tales of mediæval practices in the Black Arts . . . and jealous women fashioning effigies of their

enemies out of wax and setting these to melt before the fire. . . .

There were other shops where the famous marzipan of Toledo was offered in white satin boxes with the sacred monogram in gold on the lids . . . "appropriate for the First Communion," the shopkeeper told us with pride. And others that showed fine Toledo blades as supple as springs, and strong enough to sever steel. The Cid had two such swords, Colada and Tizon, purchased perhaps in this very shop, and — we took another look — yes, from this very grave and taciturn armorer whose skin is the color of dried old parchment, and whose eyes have burnt out the light that was in them years, perhaps centuries, ago.

The dominant power of Toledo, as of the Spanish soul, is Catholicism. The city by the Tagus is the church's capital in Spain. From this rock-ribbed fortress she reaches out to touch the passionate heart of *el Andaluz*, the dour strength of Aragon, the primitive piety of Estremadura, the commercialism of Cataluña, the thin mysticism of Old Castile. It is a power such as Madrid has never known.

The magnificent cathedral has an imperial grandeur. Peter, " the son of Peter " began it in 1227. He brought into Spain the best traditions of French Gothic art. The three great recessed portals with their rich sculptures, the tall north tower rising clear and proud, the tallest pinnacle in tall Toledo, and within, the stateliness of the great nave, the height and majesty of the columns, the rich colors of the glass, all these combine to create an effect of great nobility.

"O Thou That Art Alone, Thou That Rulest All

Things, Show Mercy To Him That Wrought This Thy Temple So Wonderfully," runs the epitaph on Peter, son of Peter's tomb.

But in its supreme architectural perfection, Toledo's is a church for Churchmen, not for penitents and sinners.

Blasco Ibañez made it the theme of his novel "The Cathedral." They say that its Holy Week ceremonies are even more magnificent than Seville's, and more solemn. Certainly Toledo does not lend itself readily to the lighter moods of the Andalusian temperament, which makes of the *semana santa* a gala occasion. But to offset this, perhaps, Toledo adds to its processions of religious *pasos* grotesque gigantic figures, which they call "Gothic Giants" like the mummeries of Carnival. These are carried in the processions as a sort of comic relief after the solemnity of the *pasos*—a curious bit of religious stagecraft. Betweenwhiles they are guarded in a corridor of the cathedral.

The shadow of the tall north tower fell across the cloister as we walked there. The arcade was damp and chill, the stones covered with green churchyard mould. Numbers of lean, sorry-looking cats slunk along the corridor. I suspect the Toledans of the same practices as the people of Granada as far as superfluous cats are concerned. From one of the church doors a pursy canon in crimson silk shooed one unfortunate tabby, with the help of a small acolyte whose grin betrayed his enjoyment of this break in his duties.

The green mould has nearly obliterated the cloister frescoes of the Jews torturing a Christian child. When they were new from the artist's brush, the paintings provoked a race riot in Toledo and poured oil on the smouldering fires of the Inquisition.

Toledo was the centre of Jewish thought in Spain. Dark and secretive, it remains Jewish still, despite the centuries of Goth and Moor. The Moors never possessed it wholly. It was an outpost to them, not heart of the heart of Islam like Cordova and Cadiz. And the fervid ritual of the Jew, the rigorous insistence on dogma, the zeal for authority live on, and have become the foundation stones for Spanish Catholicism!

Their synagogue, the *Tránsito*, remains; an exquisite empty shell with delicate ajimez windows and carved galleries and Hebrew texts running around under the coffered, cedar wood ceiling. In the dark Ghetto close by stands the house that was Samuel Levi's who was King Pedro's treasurer. Later, it belonged to that Marques de Villena who, it is said, used the deep cellars where Solomon kept the king's gold, for experiments in the Black Arts. Shortly after Villena's writings had been burnt publicly and the Marques denounced for having sold his soul to the devil, there came to live in the "accursed" house the Cretan painter Domenico Theotocopuli (the little son of God). El Greco, the townsfolk called him, and whispered that he was mad or bewitched.

People divide naturally into two groups, those who can't abide El Greco, and those who having seen him are forever after a little touched, like all mortals who have stood within a faery ring. There isn't any middle ground, apparently.

I had looked forward to El Greco in Toledo as I had looked forward to the Alhambra in Granada. No, not exactly. For about the Alhambra I had been fearful. I didn't see how it possibly could come up to all that I had imagined of it. Of El Greco I had no doubts.

I knew where I stood with him. In years in a rather grubby office in Grub Street there had been one unfailing panacea for days of black depression. When the things of this world grew too much, I would put on my hat and shake the dust and the clatter and the personalities of that office from my feet. I would mount a Fifth Avenue bus and jolt up along Riverside to the Spanish Museum in 155th Street. And there I would spend an hour, with Sorolla on the first floor, and then upstairs nearer the clouds and the stars where poets dwell, with El Greco.

If El Greco was mad, it was with a divine frenzy akin to that which fired the Old Testament prophets to cry aloud their ecstasy and their despair. He painted human beings in the terms of their own souls. His *hidalgos* are proud, sad, wise with the wisdom that accepts futility. His saints are an-hungered for immortality. He loved Toledo as fanatically as Tintoretto loved Venice, he IS Toledo. The city possessed him, not he it — and he a Greek, who reached it by way of Venice and Rome.

El Greco's house is now a museum. The Marques de la Vega Inclan who has done so much to make the treasures of his land available to foreign visitors, has restored it and presented it to the nation. He has filled the rooms with appropriate furnishings all of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Though the finest of the painter's works are in the Prado, a few portraits and a series of apostles are there in the rooms where the painter worked. The flaming *Burial of Conde Orgaz*, which critics agree is his masterpiece, hangs in Santo Tomé close by.

El Greco's house has a beautiful simple patio with an

upper gallery supported by hewn posts of olive wood and a wainscoting of tiles. The painter's tiny oratory opens from it, and from the terrace garden one looks across Toledo to the sweep of the plains and the roll of smooth hills to the west.

We, being feminine, were especially delighted by the collection of old cookery books and herbals which have been ranged on a shelf about the kitchen. There was among them a copy of THE ART OF CARVING, by the very Marques de Villena who whetted his knives in this very room. The Marques was more than a fifteenth century gourmet, he was as well a sort of Emily Post concerned with the etiquette of the trencher. He laid down rules for carver and diner, including the proper behaviour of a guest at a royal banquet when his majesty gets a crumb on his chin!

We had saved for the last the Posada del Sangre where Cervantes lodged on his visits to Toledo.

The Inn of the Blood is still a posada frequented by carters and drovers who fling their travel-stained *alforjas* down on the stones of the court and drink greedily from the enormous water butt in one corner; just, one imagines, as Cervantes must have done when he came up the straggling road from Illescas and his courting.

Lope de Vega came there too, and wrote his *Death of King Wamba* in one of the upper rooms, shouting over the gallery rail between scenes for wine and yet more wine.

The posada was pleasantly busy that afternoon. A slatternly Maritornes lounged in the kitchen doorway and chaffed idly with two carters who were harnessing their mules. In the opposite corner a travelling show-

man, just arrived for the approaching *féria* of the Virgin de la Cabeza was settling his belongings. His troupe consisted of a fat wife with a cast in one eye, and several children, and a sullen-eyed dancing girl. The girl had gypsy blood. Her features were clear cut and proud beneath the twist of green headkerchief. Her deep fringed orange shawl was drawn boldly over her proud breasts. She sat on the tail of the cart and eyed us scornfully. Then, in response to some remark of the carters', she spat with fine disdain.

Probably other carts and other show folk would be coming for the fair, which is an annual holiday in Toledo. In nearly every town there is a Virgin "of the head," to whom all dolors of the head and scalp are brought. All the glossy, well-oiled black coiffeurs of the feminine half of Spain are under her protection.

Yes, truly, even Toledo has its light moments.

Hastening down the street near the church "of the Light" we passed a small shrine that was let into the house wall. Behind a grating appeared a statue of the Mater Dolorosa, her breast pierced with seven gleaming swords. She is famed locally as the Virgin "of the Pins".

There were giggles behind us.

Two *majas* of Toledo, their smoothly coiffed heads glistening above their solemn black shawls, had paused before the shrine. One drew a pin from her bodice and tossed it through the grating. Then both stood on tiptoe, hands on hips, peering though the *reja*. If the pin passed through the meshes, if it lodged in the velvet of la Dolorosa's gown, then, by all the portents, signs and symbols there would be a *novio* within the year.

THE HOUSE WHERE COLUMBUS DIED — VALLADOLID

THE GATE INTO SEGOVIA

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

SOL Y SOMBRE IN MADRID

STRAWBERRIES of Aranjuez. We read the sign over a fruit stall in Toledo's Zocodover, and our mouths began to water. Aranjuez with its royal palace and pleasure grounds lay along the Tagus between Toledo and Madrid. We determined to visit it en route.

The royal domain of Aranjuez lies surprisingly in a forest of English elms and sycamores. One has need to travel the unshaded road through Spain over miles of *despoblados* to appreciate the gratefulness of their shade. Philip II, who, like his father, was a garden lover, planted the trees . . . fifty thousand of them, the records tell.

A sleepiness pervaded the little village outside the palace gates, but in the palace parterres the gardeners were busy setting out cinerarias and wall flowers already in bloom. A formal garden with clipped box hedges and magnolias runs down to the canal that links two curves of the Tagus. Beyond, stretches the park with broad drives between the elm trees.

The great palace was closed to visitors that day, but we were admitted to the little House of the Workman hidden deep in the forest. Charles IV built it as a Petit Trianon where he and his queen played at being simple folk in an atmosphere of ormolu and malachite.

One walks through the brocade-hung rooms with their mirrors and sconces that reflected the sinister face of Queen María Luise, and remembers that this was the setting of that court which Goya put upon canvas.

The island formed by the curve of the Tagus and the canal was laid out in delicious gardens by Philip II who used to walk here to listen to his beloved nightingales. It is the scene of Schiller's *Don Carlos*. Later Philip V and his queen held masques here, and their French courtiers played it was Versailles. Thickets of syringa and lilac and wisteria made the island garden lovely for us, and a grove of Judas trees in flower overhung a stone bench where we rested. Rusiñol, the Spanish garden painter, has painted these gardens many times.

And there were strawberries. We bought them in the village by the bridge in a tiny basket woven of ozier twigs, and we ate them luxuriously, one apiece to a kilometer, along the road to Madrid.

Madrid . . . a clang and a clatter, the pip and squeak and honk of impatient motor horns, the shrill cries of the sellers of fruits, lottery tickets, newspapers, turtles, boiled crabs, crickets in cages to be worn on the lapel and sugary cakes . . . thousands of *madrileños* milling around in the Puerto del Sol, which to our surprise was not a gate, but an oval plaza framed by ugly buildings from which nine of Madrid's busiest streets radiate.

With no knowledge of our hotel but its name, I drew up beside a policeman for information.

A crowd gathered helpfully. A dozen voices informed the policeman what to inform me. A portly gentleman

in a plum-colored cape and a stiffly pointed beard that jutted forward importantly over the velvet collar, plucked a small boy out of the crowd by the nape of the neck and presented him to the policeman to act as a guide for us. The policeman eyed the boy distrustfully, rejected him in favor of a seedy looking man in a black beret, and after making him rehearse street by street the route he would take us, opened Ximena's rear door, pushed the guide in, and motioned us off with a hand at the salute.

Madrid is a continental city. The *madrileñas* wear hats from Paris. There is not a *mantilla* or a shawl in sight. Pompous banks — German and South American — and government buildings along the Calle Alcalá, fine shops and motor show rooms, and a skyscraper on the Gran Vía, and the entrances to the Metro, which from all outward appearances might lead to Bowling Green, almost persuade you that this is not Spain at all.

Almost, but not quite. For suddenly a gilded coach drawn by four horses, with coachmen and postilions in curled white wigs, preceded by a band and followed by a company of soldiers marching with arms reversed, turns into the Calle Monterá. All traffic stops. The motorman leaves his tram; passengers and pedestrians along the curb go down on their knees. The coach stops and from it step three priests in gold embroidered vestments. One carries a great golden pyx in which is the Host. Attended by acolytes with swinging censers and preceded by the drummer beating a muffled tatto, the priests proceed the length of the street between the kneeling crowds. They return, enter the coach and the procession moves on to the next street.

So God moves through Madrid!

The motorman resumes his post and jangles his bell, the people rise, brush the dust from their knees and go their ways, the taxi horns begin their din, a line of patient asses, their straw panniers bulging with artichokes, thread their way between the flashing motors, a water seller swings his white clay jar to his hip and darts agilely between wheels droning his shrill "*Agua-a-a*"; two baker's boys balancing on their heads broad wooden trays filled with *pastas* stop before a news kiosk to read the returns of yesterday's lottery. Suddenly one of them shouts, and tosses his tray into the air. There is a rain of little cakes and tarts, and the boy takes to his heels for the nearest bank to redeem his lucky "tenth."

All sorts of things are lucky. It is lucky to buy your ticket from a cripple; unlucky not to take the first ticket your fingers touch; lucky to buy on Sunday or a *fiesta*, or on a day when you have seen your sweetheart. Luckiest of all, to buy from Tía María who keeps a shop on the Calle San Bernardo and whose winnings, so they say, have made her a millionaire.

Madrid rouses itself about nine. From our balcony we watch the yawning apprentices take down the shop shutters. At the café across the way the kitchen boy brings his coffee roaster out to the curb and turns the beans over the glowing charcoal. A delicious fragrance floats up to us. Business begins languidly about ten, to stop at one, and drowse for two and a half hours behind lowered blinds and tightly locked doors. The Grand Vía at two in the afternoon is as dead as Main Street at the same hour of the morning. Shortly after three, the *madrileños* appear at the cafés for their afternoon coffee. From five o'clock until eight-thirty when

the first early diners start home for dinner, and there is a momentary lull, everyone is abroad. Nor is there any cessation of the noise of traffic, the steady flow of Spanish conversation, until after two in the morning. One must in self-defense live as the *madrileños* do — nocturnally.

So we go to the cinema for a matinée at six in the afternoon; to El Monumental where the announcement that the management will show only Spanish films provokes vociferous applause. The picture is Sister San Sulpicio, a story of Seville and clandestine love within convent walls. An American Board of Censors would hesitate over some of the scenes, but in Spain it is considered very innocent fare indeed. There is dancing between this and the news reel. The stage is set for a *tertulia* in Seville. There is the May Cross in the centre of the patio, the heavy, black satin, female relatives in armchairs under the vines, and in the centre about the Cross of May eight girls dance the *sevillana*. They are graduates of Professor Otero's dancing school the program announces . . . Otero who is the greatest dancing master in Spain with a long list of stars to his credit.

Then home to dine at nine o'clock, and the theatre after that, with the curtain rising at ten forty-five.

More than all else, the Good Sport loves a market. Every market has its day; that of the Encantes in Barcelona, thus far the finest market we had seen in Spain, is Friday. Then, the Catalans tell you with a smile, you may buy back the very things that were stolen from your house on Thursday!

But the day of Madrid's Rag Fair is Sunday. The

taxi driver grins when we give him the address — "To the Rastro." All Madrid is going to the Rastro, it would seem. The Good Sport sits forward on the edge of the seat. Will there be any bargains left for us?

We arrive and dismiss the cab. No vehicle larger than an Asturian donkey cart could find a way through that crowd. For ten blocks and more, the Rastro is lined with four rows of stalls and between them the *majos* and *majas* of Madrid, the country folk in for the holiday, buyers, sellers, lookers-on, surge in an unwearying processional. The air is heavy with the commingled smells of musk, garlic and peasant folk. It is raucous with voices, enticing, cajoling, bargaining, protesting; with cries: "*Barato! Barato! Barato!*"

There are no food stuffs offered in the Rastro, but that is the only omission. Mixed in with suspenders, blankets, harness, tinware, old uniforms, new calico, knives, tinsel jewelry . . . what a pity that the Spanish peasant women are discarding their old heavy, hand wrought earrings and brooches for the cheap rhinestones and Brummagem ornaments that glitter in every market, and are offered for sale, even on the railway platforms! . . . rosaries, *alpargatas*, old iron, and bath towels ornamented with the portraits in gaudy colors of favorite matadors, are heaps of rags. They lie like mounds of vivid autumn leaves. The merchant turns the pile over with a stick and out of the mass come a length of pansy purple brocade, the sleeve of a matador's jacket, a tattered velvet chasuble, a yard of old galloon. Here is richness. Where do they come from, these tag ends of once lovely things? Out of the garrets of old houses, the scrap drawers of sacristies. When I learned that every sacristy has what is called a "rag drawer"

into which torn or discarded bits of altar hangings and vestments are stuffed, my fingers itched whenever I was in one of them.

The merchants of the Rastro are clever. For foreigners they bring out piles of shawls, many new, more old, with the thin fringe which is the mark of the antique *mantone*. They spread them enticingly before your eyes; they drape them stealthily about your shoulders, and stand back, crying aloud, "*Hermosa!*" And the bystanders, entering into the spirit of the game, chorus the compliment, and then crane their necks to see if the *inglésa* is going to buy.

We did buy, not shawls, but some tiny brooches of gold filigree with little enamels of saints, and a pair of old leather buskins with dangling fringes, embroidered over in a floral pattern in colored silks that would have delighted Rosalind.

The last purchase seemed to be of great interest to the crowd. They closed in around us. The merchant lifted his voice above our heads: "Come buy from me. See, man, all the Americans buy from me." Then, catching our eye and aware that we understood, he had not the grace to blush, but winked broadly as he quoted the proverb: "Where there is no hook, there will hang no bacon."

The Rastro forms one boundary of the southwestern barrier which is all that remains of the romantic Madrid of Quevedo and Calderón. Its heart is the Plaza Mayor. Tall palm trees grow in the centre of the square which is the one truly Spanish thing left of Philip's capital. The tall galleried houses look down on the deserted quiet of the gallants' duelling ground. *Corridas* used

to be held here in the square while the ladies and gallants looked on from the galleries. They looked on, too, at more ghastly sports, the *auto de fés*, in which on one occasion twenty-one heretics were burnt! When the Prince of Wales, later Charles II, came courting the Infanta, the King held a tournament here in his honor. But Charles, one remembers, found the etiquette of the Spanish Court too stilted for his liking, and his impetuous wooing so terrified the Infanta that she fainted in a heap of proper brocades. Charles shrugged his shoulders and went back to Drury Lane.

El Rey lives in a monumental bleak palace that overlooks the languid Manzanares where Madrid's washerwomen congregate. His Most Catholic Majesty enjoys from his windows a fluttering display of shirts and nether garments. The inner gorgeousness of the Madrid palace made Napoleon exclaim enviously, "You will be better housed than I, Brother Joseph." We got cards from the Embassy that permitted us to make the tour of the state apartments. But it was a magnificence that seemed to us dispiriting. And last year's dried palm branches still fluttered dismally from the balconies outside.

The city comes democratically close. Nursemaids and babies, strolling soldiers, beggars and *flaneurs* loiter about the Plaza de Oriente where, before the door, the statues of the kings and queens of Castile and Aragon stand among the myrtles. At eleven each morning when the palace guard is changed, the crowd moves through the archway to the Plaza de Armas between the wings of the palace to view the spectacle. The King inspects the guard. The sun glitters on burnished helmets. The horses . . . these officers of Spain are

magnificently mounted . . . curvet and prance. There are flying plumes, the blare of bugles, a satisfied murmur from the crowd as El Rey, having dismissed the guard, turns to his people, smiles his famous smile and waves a hand cheerily. We remember the words of our *camerero* in Malaga, "*El Rey está muy simpático.*"

When the crowd disperses, we go across the plaza to visit the Armeria, wherein is the most famous collection of armor in the world of all the champions of Spain, including that of our old friend Diego de Paredes of Trujillo.

It is the centenary of Goya's death, and Madrid is keeping the memory of the painter who lies closest to her heart. There is a special exhibition of his Caprichos in the Biblioteca Nacional. The tiny church of San Antonio de la Florida, whose cupola he adorned with frescoes, has been restored, and set apart as a national monument. But one sees Goya at his greatest in the Prado. His Madrid lives on those walls in the designs for the famous tapestries which hang in the Escorial.

Goya's brush is dipped in caustic. He spares us not a single slyness of the sinister María Luise. He allows no kindly shadow to fall over her poltroon husband. For one thing, while he mixed his colors, they were singing La Marseillaise across the Pyrenees, and his sensual lips curled as he painted the twilight of the kings.

Goya scorns, but Velasquez pities. His Philip IV is the saddest monarch on canvas. His Infantas are doomed to tragedy, and Valesquez knows and limns their dull, apathetic faces with sublime compassion. I know no more poignant commentary on an age than his four Buffoons. They belong with the Fool in Lear,

and the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance among the great tragic figures of all art.

Velasquez has been called the painter's painter. He is, like Cervantes, a very noble gentleman, and if experience has left him a little sad, it has given him a divine and magnificent pity, in which there is no trace of bitterness.

Alfonso XIII in the palace, Philip IV and Charles IV in the Prado, but the spirit of Philip II lives in the Escorial. The royal monastery and pantheon, which he built, lies some thirty miles north of Madrid in the lee of the bleak Guardarramas. We suffered an involuntary shiver at the aspect of the grand and gloomy pile. Philip's genius for the macabre had it designed in the form of a gridiron out of deference to St. Laurence who suffered martyrdom on that instrument. The Escorial is church, monastery — a seminary now, pantheon for the kings of Spain, and royal palace. We walked through the miles of corridors, climbed mountains of steps, and exhausted ourselves in admiration of brocades and tapestries, beautiful carved seventeenth century furniture, and lovely star lanterns. But even the two wax footmen in canary satin which guard one of the palace doors could not make us forget the rows of dead kings laid away on shelves below the altar of the church. Rigorous etiquette prevails; kings of Spain to the left, queens who were mothers of kings to the right, and the infantes and infantas and queens who gave no heirs, in a separate mortuary not quite so sumptuous.

One is shown Philip's bedroom, and the bed on which he lay and watched the elevation of the Host. It was a

strange taste, but after all, it was not original with him. His father had done the same thing at Yuste.

Nowadays there is a movement on foot in Spain to whitewash Philip, or rather to remove the odium with which history has invested him. A friend sent us a book which she had purchased from the book seller in Escorial. It was by a learned church historian whose thesis was to explain that Philip did not poison his son, Don Carlos. And now we understand that the Government is exhuming the body of Don Carlos to prove the truth of this — after four centuries!

It seemed strange to find that the Escorial had a village . . . quite a gay little village with a chocolate manufactury, and trees along the streets, and people sitting at the open air cafés under them, dipping *azucarillos* in tepid water, and drinking the sweet syrup with their bitter chocolate custard, and reading el Mundo Gráfico. And a cinema that advertised a Bill Hart movie!

"There is one compatriot of yours, *señorita*, who understands the art of bull fighting as well as a Spaniard."

The voice was Spanish, but it spoke in English with an English accent. I turned to the man who sat next me on the curving, stone seat of the bull ring. A short stocky man, in English tweeds, but a Spaniard for all that.

"Who is that?" I hazarded.

"Heminway. He is the only man not born in Spain who really understands."

And while the crowds filled the amphitheatre for the greatest *corrida* of the Spring season, a benefit per-

formance for the new University under the patronage of El Rey, and with the Infanta Eulalia in the royal box, my neighbor and I talked of Heminway and *corridas* and Spain as it is seen through Anglo Saxon eyes.

My neighbor was a Basque, educated in an English public school, by profession an engineer. He had built bridges in the Andes and Mexico. He knew Times Square, and Piccadilly, and Chicago's Loop, and the Bund in Yokohama as well as the Puerto del Sol. He spoke of these things casually, and with fervor of the mountain village in the Pyrenees which was his home and which was also the village of Aguero whom we had come to see fight that afternoon, and of Paulino . . . I confess he had to enlighten me as to Paulino's fame . . . who sat that day in a box next to the Infanta's and shared honors with the *espada*.

This was not my first *corrida de toros*. I had gone to one in Barcelona, and left after the first bull. I had gone again in Valencia during the Fallas. Then I had stayed for four bulls.

"Surely you're not going again," the Good Sport had cried when I waved my purple ticket for the coveted SOMBRE. She reminded me of the story we had been told on good authority of the English woman who came to Spain for six weeks, saw three bull fights, and remained for two years, in the course of which she never missed a Sunday *corrida*.

For, horrible as the bull fight is, and no sport according to the Anglo Saxon interpretation of the word, there is still a fascination about the movement of the drama of the ring. This fascination does not lie in the entering procession when the actors swing into the arena to the blare of trumpets and the enthusiastic hand clapping

of the crowd . . . any American circus puts on a better show . . . but in that delicately balanced dance of death between beast and man; in the contrast of the man's satin-clad agility and the colossal strength of the bull; in the intricate weaving and twisting and play of the scarlet *muleta* above the lowered horns.

There is a fine art about every movement which is appreciated by the fans, and never sensed by the tourist who goes to one bull fight . . . usually a poor one. Nor does one become an expert after a dozen *corridas*. "When you have been seeing bull fights for thirty years as I have," said my Basque neighbor, "then you may say that you are beginning to understand how things are done, and how they should be done."

Of course, there are bulls and bulls. Some of them, like that first *toro* I saw in Barcelona, have no fight in them, and have to be goaded, tortured, brutalized into giving the *toreros* an opportunity to display their prowess. But when it is a blooded beast, fast and fierce . . . and cunning . . . and how quickly after that first encounter with the magenta capes they "know their Latin" as the saying goes . . . when the *espada* is an artist who directs the fight from the moment the bull rushes into the arena to the driving of the sword clean up to the hilt in the vulnerable spot between the shoulder blades, so that the bull drops to his knees before the man and dies without shedding blood from the wound; when, as I say, the *espada* is an artist and an impressario, then one begins to understand why the bull fight is Spain's universal entertainment.

Oh, I am not minimizing the bloody torture of the horses! "Do not look," said my Basque neighbor. And he gave me a paper fan with which to cover my eyes.

Then, a moment later, "Ah, it is over now. Now you may look. Ah . . . Pretty . . . Very pretty. Ah!"

The *banderillero* was placing the ribboned darts, two at a time, simultaneously, one from each hand, and between the bull's horns. It isn't easy . . .

It was Aguero's day. When he stepped into the arena he bowed low before Paulino's box, dedicating that bull to him. It was a magnificent beast, very heavy in the shoulders, and tapering to the hindquarters. Aguero stood before it with apparent unconcern. A slender, almost effeminate figure in plum-colored satin and spangles . . . one thought of Don John in his white and gold brocade on the bloodstained quarterdeck. Then delicately, exquisitely, he began his play, using the *muleta* to manœuver the bull into position . . . "See," said the low voice at my side, "the bull must stand so, he must hold his head so, that the vulnerable spot between the shoulder blades may be exposed for the *espada's* sword to go in . . . It is so small, that spot. Only a few inches . . . and one movement of the bull, if he shifts his fore foot . . . one little movement, and the shoulder blades come together and the sword will not go in . . ."

Like lightning, no, like a slender, flashing Toledo blade, supple and strong, Aguero struck. He drove the sword between the lowered horns up to its hilt. The bull staggered, then went down on its knees before the man . . . dead.

The crowd on the benches . . . plebian *sol* and bourgeois *sombre*, as well as the boxes of aristocracy . . . all went mad. The men tossed their hats into the ring, the women their flowers. An official ran out into the arena and cut the ear from the bull and presented it

to the *espada* . . . the highest tribute of the ring. The gaily caparisoned mules dragged the body of the bull twice about the ring while the crowd cheered, impartially: "*Bravo toro!*" And Aguero, taut, his arms folded over his chest, walked gravely around the ring, bowed and disappeared.

"If you go to bull fights all your life, you will never see anything more perfect than that." The Basque engineer's voice was husky.

There are those who say that the *corridas* are not as formerly the national sport of Spain; that games are coming in to take their place . . . *pelota*, the very fast Basque tennis, and for the multitudes, football. It may be that they are right. True, every village has its playing field, and as we drove through the country we saw young boys and men playing there. But the truth is that the bull ring is far from being displaced. Men and women and small boys speak with affectionate intimacy of Aguero, the best "killer" in Spain; of Chicuelo who did not live up to his reputation at the last big *corrida*, and must now redeem himself, or lose his rank as an artist with the *muleta*; of Belmonte the magnificent, and young Mariano Rodriguez, of the famous Triana stock, whose great grandfather and great granduncle figured in the *corridas* that Gautier came from Paris to witness in 1840.

I am not defending the bull fight. I would not minimize one iota of its stark cruelty. But I am saying that no foreigner who makes a three weeks tour of Spain, and sees one *corrida*, and comes away disgusted and horrified by the spectacle, and forever after classes the Spaniards as savages, approaches the truth. No amusement can have such a hold on millions of persons

of every class for generations, and keep that hold despite all outside criticism, that has not its roots in art. It is that art which the Spaniard sees, and which the foreigner does not see. And for sake of it, the Spaniard accepts the bloodshed and the torture of the horses . . . regretfully, but accepts them none the less as unavoidable accompaniments to the combat which he stages for his own peculiar pleasure.

I did not go to another *corrida*. Perhaps I did not dare; afraid, lest like the English lady and "Heminway, the only American who really understands," like the Basque engineer who wore the Old Etonians' tie, I too become an *aficionado*.

On May fifteenth, we and all good *madrileños* kept the *romería* of San Isidro. That morning, a procession had moved down the Calle de Toledo bearing the bone of the Saint from his royal church to the *ermita* on the opposite bank of the Manzanares. There it would remain for ten days of *féria*.

Romerías, we knew, are customary procedures during the month of May throughout Spain. Then the relics of popular saints and some of the especially revered images of the Virgin are taken from their churches on a sort of picnic excursion into the country. When this is a matter of several days journey, as happens with several of the Virgins of Seville, the procession of gaily decorated carts and riders camps along the way, and there are religious ceremonies and dancing and *música*, and much "plucking the turkey."

But San Isidro "the farmer", belongs to Madrid. His bone is carried no further than a few miles. The *ermita* stands on the site of his garden and sacred well where

Isabella, the Empress, built it in gratitude for the good the water did her husband.

We were advised to go on the first day of the *féria*, because "later, it gets a bit rough."

Though it was raining heavily, neither the rain nor the mud, which was ankle deep along the paths, dampened the enthusiasm of the *madrileños*.

The hermitage stands at the top of a steep hill. From the river bank up to the little church, the slope was crowded with tents, booths, market stalls, where one bought nuts and *turrone* and *rosquillas del santo*. Where you could have your fortune told, or be photographed with your head showing above a headless *papier mâché* figure of an *espada*, dealing the death thrust to a *papier mâché* bull. There were dance pavilions and booths where *jota* singers gave exhibitions. There was a fat woman from Utrera, "*la Gorda*." There may even have been a tattooed man.

But chiefly in evidence were the potters squatting under big umbrellas among dozens and dozens of red clay jars and pitchers. For days they had been coming in from round about Toledo, their donkeys laden with their red wares. Each pilgrim who went up the hill to the *ermita* bought a vessel in which to carry away some water from San Isidro's well.

At the top we found a crowd of several hundred persons thronging the church steps and pressed yearningly against the barred gates, all regardless of the rain which poured upon them. Presently a boy appeared in the belfry and tolled the bell. Two *carabineri* opened the gates and the crowd surged in, as many as the church would hold. Then the gates were shut behind us. They had been doing this at fifteen minute intervals all day,

and would continue to do so throughout the ten days of *féria.*

A statue of San Isidro in his goatskin coat with his hoe in his hand, and one of his wife in a neat apron and shawl stood above the altar. Strange patrons, surely, for official and royal Madrid. A priest sat in an armchair beside the altar and held up the silver reliquary in which was the bone of the saint. Each pilgrim knelt, kissed the reliquary, dropped a coin in the copper basin at the priest's foot and passed out the rear door to draw water from the sacred well.

We were a representative crowd . . . soldiers, peasants, beggars, small shopkeepers and prosperous bourgeois whose automobiles stood parked outside . . . a cross section of Madrid. There was nothing sentimental or emotional about us. The thick atmosphere was purely businesslike. All these people had come for a purpose, to procure for themselves certain spiritual benefits.

The soldiers before me kissed the relic with resounding piety. It was my turn. The priest gave me a sharp look, caught up a corner of his surplice and polished the glass of the reliquary vigorously. I kissed and passed on.

Someday I mean to look up San Isidro Labrador and find out what manner of blessing is attached to devotion to his relic, lest like M. Jourdain and his prose, I possess it seven years without due appreciation.

And now I must tell that we parted with Ximena in Madrid. It was our first intention to go on to England by boat, and in view of many things, it seemed best to leave the little car in Spain without more customs formal-

ities. We would have kept her till our last day there, but that the agent warned us we might have difficulty in selling her in Burgos or Vigo. Our chances were better in Madrid.

I think we both had a secret hope that no purchaser would be found, and when the time came for us to move northward, we would have to take Ximena too. But one day, two young men, Valencians, arrived. They wanted a Ford in which to drive back to Valencia. There was Ximena . . . Ergo . . .

I took them out in the Retiro to show off her paces, in among the dowagers' victorias and Hispana-Suizas, but with a sorry heart. The *valencianos*, who got in fearfully and prayerfully, never having seen a woman drive a car before, much less ridden with a woman at the wheel, were enraptured. They wanted Ximena at once.

We signed the papers and the receipt, and shook hands. The last thing I did was to remove the Automobile Club insignia from Ximena's radiator. Then from the window of our hotel, I saw them drive away.

Somewhere in the city which her illustrious namesake ruled, our Ximena is still going strong. For us, no doubt there will be other cars of other names, but never any one more faithful, never one to share with us a gayer adventure.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

HILL TOWNS OF OLD CASTILE

(*Avila* and *Segovia*)

IGHT . . . nine . . . ; the typewriter, ten; the basket of pottery, eleven; the bundle of books done up in sacking, twelve . . ."

The Good Sport counted toll of our luggage. We were packing to leave Madrid after seven weeks in the capital.

Now we sat on the edge of the Good Sport's bed and ruefully considered the array of baggage. When we had Ximena it had been so easy to add one more basket or jug or bowl to our collection. What did six seventeenth century tiles weigh when Ximena carried the load against the joy these would give us at home? But now . . .

The concierge, on his knees tightening the straps of the knobbiest canvas hold-all that ever came from anything but a P and O liner homeward bound, shook his head over the probable fate of us and the twelve pieces of luggage once we left his tender care for the doubtful mercies of the Spanish Railway system.

We, too, had our doubts. That concierge had the soul of a perfect hotel keeper, for he was Swiss. Also, he was young and very much in earnest. It was his ambition to rouse a *dolce far niente* proprietor to ideals of hotel keeping that would appeal to American tourists.

I believe he spent his free afternoons sleuthing around the corridors of the Ritz. And he used to waylay us on the stairs with questions about the management of hotels in America. How many clean towels were allowed each week? How many clean napkins? Who did the boots? Who kept an eye on the chambermaids?

And, with dark looks toward Mrs. Proprietor ensconced comfortably behind the desk, clad in a loose wrapper and black *alpargatas*, was there not always a neat lady secretary, coiffed and corseted, to make up the bills?

Perhaps in a return of gratitude for these scraps of information, he saw us off himself on the morning train to Avila.

Spring had come to Madrid during our stay there. The gardens in the suburbs were gay with Darwin tulips and chestnut trees in flower. Once away from the city, the wide plain swept off on either side with vari-colored flower patches sprinkled here and there on its green expanse. The wild flowers were a constant delight to us. A despair too, for many of them we did not recognize, and no one that we met, tourist or Spaniard, seemed able to give us their names. "*flores del campo*," the peasants told us again and again. Or the convenient, poetical "*lirios*." We had spent one entire afternoon in Madrid trying to buy a simple book on native plants . . . such as is used in the schools, we explained. But it seems that botany, as we understand it, is not taught in Spain, and the only botanies in existence were chemists' herbals, many of them of Arabic origin.

The railroad took us past Escorial. We could see the

gloomy, slate grey towers from the carriage window. Then on into the hills, winding upward through deep ravines covered with pine forests redolent with turpentine, with the Manzanares, a mountain torrent here, coursing through thickets of flowering heather and broom. The windows to our right were filled with vistas of the snow capped Guadarramas. To the left, we looked across the rolling table lands to the Sierra de Gredes. Then, rounding a wide curve in the sierra, we had our first view of Avila.

It seemed at first too perfect to be true, that walled town serene and self-composed, crowning a steep rise of hill like a granite crown. The sun shone full on the bastions and towers.

Carcassonne we had seen and loved, and the cyclopean walls of Tarragona, but neither of these compares with Avila. It is the most perfect walled town in existence.

A field of scarlet poppies ran fluttering from the railway to the walls. In that flowery mead, the forces of Castile met to solemnly depose Henry "*el Impotente*"; they crowned in his stead the young Alfonso and carried him in state across the field, and in at the gate to be blessed in the cathedral. And they declared Doña Isabel Alfonso's lawful heir, and thus laid the first stone of a united Spain.

Avila lies a dusty mile or so from the railway. I like the way these very old towns hold themselves aloof. They do not run screaming to meet you with WELCOME signs, and posters of the local Rotary Club. Instead, they stand off quietly with hands folded until the train has puffed away and the chain that ties you to Madrid and the modern world is loosed. They allow

THE ROMAN BRIDGE AT ORENSE — OVER THE MINHO

THE MARKET SQUARE OF BURGOS

you time to fit your mood to theirs. It is as though they said, "We can afford to wait, we who have cradled an hundred generations. When you come, you must come freely, give yourself utterly and without reservation. And in return you shall have the goblet of the past to sip . . ."

We sent the luggage forward in the hotel bus, preferring to walk the distance. There are towns that one approaches properly only on foot. Avila is such a one . . . Avila of the Kings; Avila of the Knights; Avila or the Saints. It has borne the three titles like guidons from its towers.

Later, we drove around the walls and counted the towers thereof, eighty-six of them, and ten fortified gates. And all strong and formidable as they were when the building of them was completed in the last decade of the eleventh century.

One looks for a company of knights in silver armor to issue from those gates, or for a lady on a gaily caparisoned palfrey with curled pages in attendance, but there was only a very old man sitting the haunches of his donkey and belaboring it with his furled, cotton umbrella, and four or five peasant women. They trudged painfully through the dust. They were bent forward as though all their lives long they had walked into the teeth of a bitter wind. Fate had twisted and gnarled them like the oak trees on the hillsides of Castile. They wore their vivid striped *alforjas* slung over their shoulders like scarves.

Yes, the kings and the knights have gone. But the saints remain. The city settles compactly within its walls. The streets named for saints . . . Catherine, and Esteban, and Segundus, and Juan, and Vincente,

and Theresa, the last four all of Avila, echo the ringing of many church and convent bells. Avila goes wrapped in the odor of long established sanctity.

The city boasts no fewer than four Romanesque churches, two at least, San Pedro and San Vincente, of Angevin building. They were old and rich before she built her walls. Santo Tomás, founded by the Catholic Kings and chosen by them later as the burial place for their only son Prince Juan, is of the flowing Gothic one finds in San Juan de los Reyes at Toledo. There is little lovelier in marble than the tomb of the young prince carved by the Florentine, Domenico Fancelli. The recumbent figure, so slight, so straight under the long robe, is the epitome of youth. They say the Queen was pleased; surely if a mother could be comforted, it would be by this flawless loveliness. To Fancelli was given later the commission to carve the tombs for the *Reyes Católicos* themselves at Granada, and these were the last work to come from his chisel.

The cathedral of Avila is a true fortified church. Its apse extends beyond the city wall to become one of the most formidable bastions with a walk for sentries around the top. The façade it turns to the town seems unfinished, and the ornate portal with the heavy carvings and the two wild men we had seen in Murcia and were to find again in Segovia, to have been set on at a much later date.

A row of supercilious lions guard the deserted terrace about the cathedral. In Andalusia, such a terrace would be the haunt of a dozen beggars, and the stones chalked with the hopscotch games of the children; but if there are beggars in Avila, we saw none of them, and of children, only a queue of decorous little scholars

in striped smocks being shepherded in at a gloomy doorway by two nuns.

The tall, narrow cathedral nave was filled with light. The clerestory windows are bricked in for part of their plan, and the rest filled with very pale old glass that sheds a thin, pure radiance like green and gold April sunsets. There was none of the sensuous beauty that we had come to expect of Spanish churches. It was chaste and virginal as a white birch wood. It made one think of that clear, untroubled piping heard by Tannhauser after he had escaped the Venusberg. A church for saints to pray in . . .

Theresa prayed there, they say. Avila of the Saints is before all else, Avila of Saint Theresa.

She was born there, in a house now a convent, in 1515. She was first nun, then prioress of the Encarnación which lies northwest of the city. In Avila she founded the first house of her reformed order of Carmelites, and from Avila she set out on those amazing journeys back and forth across Spain, journeys in which she built and reorganized and strengthened a dozen religious foundations. The stately, closely veiled Superior, bearing in her arms a statue of the Child Jesus, and riding her donkey over the mountain trails to Segovia and Salamanca and Valladolid, arguing with the Inquisition and coming off the victor, is as much a part of the Spanish scene as the Don or Doña Isabel.

A mystic, yes. They show you at the Encarnación the tiny room where she held holy converse with two brother saints, John of the Cross and Peter of Alcántara, and these were so filled with the grace of God that they were lifted from the floor. But she was as well a woman of affairs, of power. Her astounding vitality leaps across

Spain like fire. She had, too, a constant and refreshing humor, a grace all too rare among her countrywomen. And she was always — Woman. When poor Fray Juan de la Miseria, whose piety outran his artistic gifts, brought her the portrait he had painted of her at the age of sixty-one, she gazed at it sadly. "May God forgive you, Brother Juan," she exclaimed, "for having made me so ugly."

Theresa is not buried at Avila, but at Alba near Burgos, in whose convent she died.

We sat in the tiny park beyond the house of the saint's childhood and overlooking the south wall. We tried to read a Life of Theresa that we had bought in the convent. But the writer indulged his piety in so many florid metaphors that we soon found ourselves floundering. We shut the book. Better to feast our eyes on the broad, rolling plain, green with oats and the new barley, and a cordon of scarlet poppies outlining the road to Salamanca where Theresa, aged seven, and Rodrigo four years older, set forth hand in hand to seek martyrdom among the Moors. Rodrigo and four other brothers . . . this much we had gleaned from the pamphlet . . . later turned conquistadors and brought back fortunes from Peru and the Indies which Theresa turned to account in her foundations.

When we sought out our hotel, it was to find that it had been taken over by a wedding party. The invited guests, perspiring happily in unaccustomed tight garments, filled the corridors and dining-room. The uninvited guests of all ages, sexes and stations, including a herd of black goats, hung wistfully about the door. Meanwhile, the waiters darted back and forth with much popping of champagne corks. Presently, the

matrimonios drove up in an open carriage. The groom was very red above his large white satin rosette, and the bride dressed in a black satin street dress, but with a flowing white veil and wreath of orange blossoms, beamed proprietorially. They had been to the photographer's.

The wedding feast was long and ceremonious. We and three commercial travellers lunched in an improvised *comedor* in the bureau, and saw the platters of hors d'œuvres, fish, fowl, *cocido* and *arroz* borne past us to the feast. Baker's boys with trays of *pastas* darted in and out. The *commercios* stared wistfully at a hamper of champagne bottles that blocked the hall. Then the wedding cake was carried past, glorious in silver paper and marzipan ornaments and a spun sugar dove in the centre, and a clatter in the kitchen seemed to tell that the cook had fainted from the effort.

The process of eating took a full two hours. After that, flocks of female relatives retired heavily to upstairs rooms for their siesta. The men, gorged to repletion, filled the straw chairs and benches in the corridors. We stumbled over them when we went out and they merely stared at us out of lethargic eyes.

At half past five when we returned from our drive, we found the musicians . . . three guitars and a viola . . . tuning up in a cubby behind the stairs. The roar of conversation filled the salon, where the *tertulia* was beginning. We must have looked a bit wistful, for presently the proprietor came smiling to our door to present the compliments of el Señor Papa and Mamma of the bride. Would *las señoras inglésas* descend and join the party?

The Good Sport unfastened one corner of a port-

manteau and found a square of lace we had intended giving to a friend at home. It made an acceptable wedding gift, presented with an appropriate phrase gleaned from the conversation book. The bride seemed pleased, and her parents and parents-in-law beamed upon us, and gave the Good Sport a chair beside them at the head of the dancing floor. The bride's uncle, a portly shopowner from Leon with magnificent mustaches, led me out in the *pavanne*, while the floor cleared for us as for royal personages.

At least, I think it was the *pavanne*. The Good Sport declares that it could not have been; that the *pavanne* was the favorite dance of Catherine de Medicis, and she is sure that the steps performed so nimbly by the uncle and so haltingly by me, were not those of courts . . .

Avila is grey in a wide and barren land. Segovia is tawny yellow with splashes of red roofs, riding high above a sea of new green beech and poplar leaves. Two little rivers, escaping from the Guardarrama snows, skirt a sharply pointed peak of rock and leap together at the point. On that rock sits the city. She is not proud and remote like that other rock city, Toledo. Temperamental gardens tumble down the sides of her cliffs with calendulas and mats of blue iris, and pear, and apricot trees in tender flower. Avila is thin and grey and ascetic. Segovia is warm, and comely, and intensely human. She is like her red-haired Castilian women; like her own Doña Isabel who played as a child in the Alcazar and later was crowned there Queen of Castile. Afterward, clad in white satin and wearing her crown on her auburn braids, she walked under a purple baldaquin through the streets to the cathedral. The memory

of that red and purple and gold pageantry still floods the Street of the Lions. Avila is the city of the great saint. Segovia is the city of the great queen.

We drove into it under an avenue of sycamores, past the old-ivory-hued walls of San Millan, and so into the Plaza del Arzoquejo. The Roman aqueduct marches across it in a double file of arches to lose itself again in the mounting house walls. Its supports become walls for taverns and tenements and purple stained *bodegas;* for palaces too. The urgent life of Spain draws sustenance from the stones of Rome.

When the Moors dwelt in Segovia, the Plaza del Arzoquejo was the bazaar. It is still a place of barter. Garlands of red peppers and artichokes were strung festively about the doors of tiny shops; a country woman unloaded a pannier full of pear-shaped white cheeses, and under one arch of the Devil's Bridge three men, folded solemnly in their black and grey plaids, discussed the merits of a very small and patient ass. Their argument was not vociferous. It flowed from them in long, unhurried periods. It rose, swelled in a tide of sound. The Spaniard is not staccato like the Italian. His rhythm is unhurried and deliberate. From the solemnity of the expressions and the volume of sound, it might have been the fate of the soul they had under discussion. Suddenly the ass thrust out her head and brayed . . .

Segovia has forgotten her Romans. They call the aqueduct the Devil's Bridge, and tell you gravely that once there was a beautiful *segoviana* with whom Don Diabolo fell desperately in love. He besought her to marry him, and vowed he would do anything to win her. "Very well," said the beautiful *segoviana* with a toss of

her head, "build me a bridge and bring the water over it into the city so that I shall no longer have to carry my cántaro to the mountain spring; then I will wed you." And she laughed, because she felt very sure that she had given Don Diabolo a task that lay beyond even his powers. But in the morning, there was the bridge, and the fresh mountain water running over in a deep conduit all the way from the Sierra de Fuenbria twelve miles away. And there came Don Diabolo to claim his bride. The beautiful *segoviana* was acutely troubled. She laid the case before the Bishop . . . the Bishop took it up with the Chapter. Bishop and Chapter sallied forth to inspect the Devil's Bridge. Finally, their sharp eyes discovered here and there a stone lacking, so they argued the bridge was not truly complete; the lady was freed honorably from her promise, and the devil took himself off, and has not been seen about Segovia since.

It was the town of Juan Bravo, leader of the Communeros, a kind of Home Rule party who rose in protest against the Flemings who thronged the court of Charles V. Juan Bravo's statue stands in the tiny irregular plaza . . . it is really one-half a flight of shallow steps . . . before the church of San Martin. The church is fine Romanesque with a beautiful deep porch upheld by columns whose capitals swarm with grotesque animals; embryos, surely, of the Gothic gargoyles that were to come later; and on the other side of the square, rise tall, old palaces whose iron *rejas* and heavy wooden doors, carved and panelled and studded with iron bosses, guard jealously the rich life of Segovia's past.

Higher than San Martin rises a tall, rough stone tower with an open gallery at the top, and, halfway

THE ROAD PAST LÉON — ONCE A ROMAN GARRISON

down, one lovely ajimez window; placed there, perhaps, by the famous Abderrhaman, the Moor of Segovia, who built the cloister of Santa María del Paular over the crest of the snow-clad Peñalara.

In nearly every city we had found at least one street with a name to fire our romance loving souls. Not that the streets always lived up to the names. Usually they did not. But the names themselves, whether in Spanish or in English translation, were a delight on the tongue. There had been in Tarragona THE STREET OF THE ANCIENT WRITINGS, and in Toledo THE STREET OF THE LIFE OF POVERTY . . . A very crowded thoroughfare! The STREET OF THE IRON HAND in Granada, and right beside it, THE STREET OF THE WASHING OF THE CROSS; and in Seville THE STREET OF THE HEAD OF DON PEDRO THE KING, and OF THE LOVE OF GOD, and OF THE SWEETHEART OF THE RIVER; while Barcelona has a STREET OF PROCRASTINATION, on which I am sure I have often been a householder. But it remained for Segovia to give us the most beautiful, the most poetic of all Spanish street names — THE STREET OF THE GATE OF THE MOON.

It was little more than a passageway running between unsavoury houses to a breach in the wall through which one had a vista of green *campo* to the east. But I pictured the moon rising at the end of that vista and flooding the evil way with silver — else why the name?

The regimental band was playing gaily in the centre of the Plaza de la Constitución. Soldiers in khaki berets with a small sunburst of colors around the tassels mingled with town and country folk around the market

stalls, and elegant, slim-waisted officers sat at the café tables under the arcades about the Square. It was irresistibly gay, like the first scene of an opera — that delicious moment before either hero or villain declares himself, and one cannot know what the play may bring forth.

And curiously, the gaiety which foreign minds associate with Spain is usually lacking in Spanish crowds. It is the most orderly, the most docile crowd in the world, but it is not gay. The Spaniard is not given to laughter. Moved to emotion by music or the dance, he shouts his approving "*Olés*" fiercely, and without trace of smile.

Color was splashed lavishly about the plaza . . . in the mounds of vegetables and fruits, the flutter of calicos, the striped awnings and woolen shawls, the heap of brown and orange *cacherros*, the striped *alforjas* on the donkeys. And presiding over all this was the great golden cathedral with its Gothic finials and buttresses piling up to the central cupola and the tall, opulent bell tower at the side.

"*La Coqueta*," the Segovians call their cathedral in contrast to "*la Reina*" at Salamanca, which grew from the hand of the same architect, Juan Gil de Ontanon. *La Coqueta* glows in the noon sun like a golden brooch on the proud breast of Castile. She is deliciously young, and irretrievably gay.

That day the doors of the transepts and the western portal stood wide so that a flood of pure sunlight fell across the tesselated pavement. It seized a bit of gold on a statue, or retable, and it lighted the gilded *reja* before the high altar. Two peasants, a man and a woman, came in behind us and knelt humbly before the

reja. Their hands clutched the iron bars. So they knelt with heads flung back and faces lifted . . . the woman's shawl was of purple and magenta wool, the man carried richly striped *alforjas* slung over his shoulder. The sun touched them with an oriental splendor. They might have been Simeon and Anna brought to their knees before the glory of the Lord.

It seemed quite in keeping with *la Coqueta* to find any number of delicately carved and gilded sconces set high on the walls and on the piers of the ambulatory where their mirrors reflected soft candlelight. Avila's is a church for saints; Segovia's for gallants and fair ladies. Its musical theme is a gavotte of Mozart.

The young priest who was our guide, spoke of the cathedral with the adoration of a lover for his mistress. Had we ever seen such richness of color? Such grace? Nowhere in Spain was there another church so *simpática.* We agreed. And the cloister . . . had we ever seen stone tracery so fine? Such lightness? Such elegance? He laid his hand tenderly on a bit of carving that was thrown like a veil of old, yellowed lace between the arches.

He took us into the chapter house. A stately stairway sweeps upward to the upper room wherein is gathered the cathedral's treasure of vestments and illuminated missals. At the door of the lower room he stood a moment before he turned the key, and laid a premonitory finger on his lips. Then he threw wide the heavy oaken door.

What splendor of crimson and gold, what dignity of walnut panelling! Above the seats for the chapter, the walls were hung with crimson brocade, and above the brocades, Gobelin tapestries in their own clear, green-

ish blues and pale golds. A room that a king might envy.

I think *el padre* was pleased by our appreciation. But when I ventured a mild comment that the subject of the tapestries (the loves of Venus) was unusual for an ecclesiastical setting, he looked at me with grave rebuke. "*Manos blancos no offenden*," he said. (The hands of Beauty can do no wrong.)

La Coqueta occupies the highest site in the city at its heart. Out on the narrow prow of the cliff, and rising from it, steep and impregnable in grey parapets and conical towers, is the Alcazar.

The present building is modern. They have restored the gorgeous throne room with Isabella's seat and the low, mushroom footstools where her maids might sit and display to the full their wide hooped magnificence. We looked down from the parapet where an excited court lady dropped the Infante Pedro, and paid for her carelessness with her head, upon a tossing spray of new green leaves. May is lovely everywhere, but May in Castile is all that the homesick Englishman dreamed to find in an English April. The snow rims of the Guadarramas lay to the east and south. The air came from them clean and bracing, but the sun was hot on our cheeks.

But to see the Alcazar at its true worth, one needs to see it head on, see it from the lower road under the lee of the red cliffs on the opposite shore of the Eresma. Then, one sees it for what it is . . . the symbol of Castile. Like a great caravel straining at its hawser, the long stone cable of the Roman aqueduct which binds Segovia fast to the mountains.

Across the river from the Alcazar's proud height rises another lesser cliff, red and steep. During the middle ages, it was the custom to throw malefactors from its summit to the rocks along the stream below. They meted out this punishment to the Jewess Miriam, called ever after '*del salto*' (of the Leap), who stood accused of adultery. But she, calling upon the Virgin of Fuencisla, the patron of the city, to bear evidence of her innocence, landed unhurt. Moreover, the Virgin appeared beside her, and cut her bonds. Miriam, after all these happenings was baptized and became a person of consequence in Segovia, and is buried in the cathedral cloister where frescoes perpetuate the tale of her deliverance. A shrine was built in the cliff for the Virgin of Fuencisla.

It was a tawdry little church that smelled of new pine seats. The aged caretaker insisted on taking us up a winding stairway cut into the face of the cliff with one wall of the natural rough rock over which water trickled, to see the statue in the niche high above the altar. She thrust a hand through the opening to take two white roses from beneath the statue's feet, and these she gave to us, accepting our thanks and our peseta with a bobbing curtsey.

Then, as though in retribution, she lifted the hem of the statue's white satin robe and kissed it passionately.

"You love the Virgin very much," we said.

"*Sí, sí, sí,*" she beamed. "*Soy la sua criada.*"

To be waiting woman to the Queen of Heaven . . . What has life to give of greater glory? Fame and fortune, as we understand these things, pale before that exquisite high privilege. And if, like many another serving maid, she does spoil her mistress once in a while

of a few roses for the lining of her own pocket, this is not for want of love, but for a shrewd recognition of the value of *Don Dinero*. And doubtless *la Virgen* understands!

Daniel Zuloaga, the "uncle Daniel" of Ignacio Zuloaga's portrait in the Boston Museum, had his studio in Segovia. Here, in a deserted Romanesque church which apparently only he appreciated until his art made it of interest to all Spain, he painted, modelled, carved, made tiles and pottery, with the terrific *fogosidad* which is the mark of genius.

When Spain says Zuloaga, it is Daniel Zuloaga she means. His daughters, those two of the painting, still keep the studio, and direct the work of a dozen potters and artists who continue to make lovely ceramics, some of them from their famous father's designs.

We spent an hour with them in talk of Segovia which they love with the passionate devotion which the Castilian has for his own city. They poured it out in a flood of vivid, jewelled words, but none of these seemed to us so typical of Segovia . . . its jocund spirit, its ripe color, its proud height . . . as a word beloved of the Elizabethans — youtherie.

We loved Segovia for its youtherie.

It was only a short drive, they told us, to La Granja, the country palace of the Bourbon kings. We engaged a rattletrap taxi, and set out. The clouds were blowing in gray galleons over the rim of the Peñalara, and the wind was sharply cold. May in Castile is as variable as April everywhere else in the world.

La Granja was originally a farm of the monks of San Ildefonso, but a king passed by and cast his eye over its

woods and meadow, and took it for a hunting lodge. Philip V built there a fine palace in the manner of his beloved France, and since his day it has been one of the favorite summer palaces of royalties. The present King and Queen spent their honeymoon there.

The palace was undergoing a vigorous Spring house-cleaning, and there were ladders, and painters, and paper-hangers, and pots of paste standing about. We contented ourselves with the terrace and the park in which Isabella Farnese's fountains splashed generously. Above the tops of the trees rose the snowy Guadarramas that separate Old and New Castile. The range is five thousand feet high. The water for the fountains which are said to be finer than those at Versailles, is brought from an artificial lake lying high up on the sierra.

But I confess I find palaces dreary places as a rule, and on this day the wind was searching cold. We went back to the cab, and stirred up our driver from the siesta he was taking curled up on our cushions, and gave the order for home. We had not gone a third of the uneven jolting way before a sudden shower descended. The taxi was open, and we struggled in vain to pull up the top. We called the driver, but he only shrugged helplessly. One gathered that the top was fastened permanently in that position. He was snug enough under his own little shelter, while we . . .

But the Good Sport had brought a provident umbrella. Huddled under its inadequate shelter, we jolted the remaining miles to Segovia. And at intervals, the driver looked over his shoulder grinning at us delightedly.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

IN THE COUNTRY OF THE CID

THAT we left Segovia in a subdued frame of mind was due either to the sense of inferiority which comes with the possession of twelve pieces of baggage, one of these a market basket and one a bundle of books done up in sacking, or to the expression of the impeccable Englishman who had the corner seat of the second class carriage on the *rápido* into which the *mozo* stuffed us.

The Englishman's luggage was not scanty, but it was bound in the neat straps of Bond Street, not in the knotted ropes of a willing but not very adept Madrid concierge. He had holdalls and portmanteaus, and golf clubs and a case of guns, we . . . but I have already confessed the extent of our iniquities.

He was lean and elderly and handsome in the traditional military manner. He bore a strong resemblance to K of K. He glanced at the plain of Castile with an expression of complete boredom, and at us . . . or so I imagined . . . as we had looked at peasant women who crowded us with cabbages and live fowls. The Good Sport feigned a headache and lay back between the mounds of luggage with closed eyes. I suspected she was trying to look as though the market basket did not belong to her. I read Baedecker assiduously.

The English, I recalled from the observations of

WOMEN OF PONTEVEDRA WASHING IN THE RIVER

THE SEA FRONT OF PONTEVEDRA

other travellers, are a reserved and superior race who do not hold with the unconventional conversational habits of travelling Americans. The Good Mixer has no place on the British horizon. I thought of that recent wedding party at Avila and the *romería* of San Isidro, and tried to visualize the Englishman's expression if he had happened by in time to see our part in these *cosas de España.*

At Medina del Campo, our line joined the main route from Madrid. It was a dull-looking town with red-brown walls splashed with rain. A rotund castle stood apart from the city frowning to the north. Isabella died there, and there poor Juan *la Loca* held her brief court. It once kept Cæsar Borgia prisoner.

This section of Castile was dreary enough . . . brown plains threaded by muddy red brown roads with far apart red brown villages. The people trudging those roads seemed poorer than any we had seen since leaving the villages of Andalusia. The land was ravished in the Napoleonic and Carlist wars, and has never recovered its strength.

When we slowed into the station of Valladolid . . . no mere American tongue can round those mellifluous syllables . . . the Englishman sprang up. He leaned far out of the window and shouted for a *mozo.* When his cries brought no response, he began jerking his luggage from the racks and hurling it piece by piece out of the window. When the last portmanteau had been flung to the platform, he turned round on us in a fury . . . "I can't do it any more," he stormed. "That's what it means to grow old. I am sixty-nine, and I feel it a disgrace. We shouldn't do it . . . grow old. We should have found the way to prevent it long ago.

It is one of the absurdities of the human race that we continue to do so."

He flung himself into the corridor, and was gone. A moment later he thrust his head in through the window from the outside. "I suppose you ladies are going to Paris," he remarked genially. "*Bonne chance!*"

"And that," said the Good Sport when we both had recovered from the shock, and Valladolid lay three kilometers behind, "goes to prove that travellers' tales of the ways of other nations should be served with salt!"

At first sight of Burgos you feel like rubbing your eyes. "What, this Spain?" you say. "This well washed, trim, little grey city beside its obedient river?" Its neatness, its pointed gables, its paseo along the Arlanzon with the clipped box hedges and beds of violas and pink daisies and the topiary pheasants, seem typically Dutch. It might be a stolid little Flemish town brought over the Pyrenees in the rumble of Charles the Fifth's golden coach, and set down here to be an example in primness to the happy-go-lucky south.

We drove across the bridge, and in at the massive fortress gate set in a row of peaceful houses and small shops. The townspeople built it to honor and appease Charles Fifth for their share in the Communero uprising. He saw it, and liked it . . .

"Of course, he would," said the Good Sport. "It's so exactly his style." His imperial majesty was pleased to be pleased with his Burgalese, and he let them off the severe penalties he imposed on Segovia. The façade carries the figures of the ancient champions of the city, including Fernán González, the father of Castile, and the Cid. Both were citizens of Burgos. Charles him-

self is there, too, with a saint and an angel for good measure.

It makes an imposing entrance.

But whatever else Burgos may have in the way of treasures, these are outshone by the glory of the CATHEDRAL.

One feels impelled to write it in capitals like that for its mien of proud assurance in its own magnificence. The town presses close about it on every side. The hill rises steeply behind it, so steeply, indeed, that entering by the door of the north transept from the street, one must descend a palatial gilded staircase to reach the level of the nave.

Before the west front there is only a very little, irregular plaza shut in by tall houses with heavily sculptured doorways. It is very quiet there. No traffic comes into it; the houses are close and silent. Beside a dry and dusty fountain there is a stone bench where one may sit and fill one's eyes with that towering magnificence, the finest Gothic church south of Chartres.

They say a tampering Renaissance bishop sought to improve the façade by tearing out the old Gothic portals and substituting the plateresque doorways. Their neoclassic pediments only serve to enhance the richness of the upper galleries with their rows of saints and kings, the florid tracery of the rose window, the intricate lace work of Hans of Cologne's spires.

The interior is still more richly furnished. The carving of the choir stalls surpasses that of any Spanish cathedral except Toledo. Elaborate *rejas* guard chapels that are treasuries of sculpture. We fell in love with a charming, naïve Saint Ann. She was represented as a young mother holding the Virgin Mary crowned; and

in the daughter's arms, as a doll might be in the arms of any little girl, was a figure of the Christ Child.

Yes, Burgos is very beautiful. But in contrast to the smiling, golden radiance of *la Coqueta*, to Avila's virginal loveliness, and the pure singing beauty of La Seo of Palma, it seemed in its wealth of ornament like a rich burgess's lady magnificent in her robes of cramoisy, — sumptuous, handsome and jewelled, a Wagnerian heroine perhaps, but with it all a little, just a little, *endimanché*.

The Cid and Ximena are buried in the *coro*. Two simple stones cover the resting place of the restless pair. The Cid's strong box, the same which he filled with sand, locked and pawned by weight, contents unseen, for money to take Valencia, is kept on a high shelf in the hall of Juan Cuchiller. This gentleman, it seems, was head cook to a king with a delicate digestion, and the excellence of his sauces won him a royal burial.

But most curious of all the cathedral's treasures, and that which is, too, the most truly Spanish, is the figure called the Christ of Burgos. It is made of wood, covered with buffalo skin brought from the New World by a pious conquistador. Popular superstition believes that the figure is really a human body, stuffed — a gruesome conception which is borne out by the livid pallor of the skin and the long human hair which falls about the drooping shoulders. It wears, like many Spanish *Christos*, a satin skirt about its loins, and arranged below the feet are five ostrich eggs. Originally, the sacristan told us, these were three, ancient symbols of the Trinity and of the Resurrection, but there came a generous American lady one day with two

eggs more. So the ancient symbolism was lost for the sake of increased possession.

A golden crown surmounts the pile of eggs. This, too, was a gift from a wealthy Burgalese, but . . . I am still quoting the sacristan . . . the bowed head refused to wear the crown. As often as it was put on, it was found next morning lying at the Figure's feet. So, at last, they left it there . . .

There was a continuous movement in the chapel . . . black-shawled women coming and going, kneeling to pray, lighting a candle, or a tiny, flickering taper in a red glass cup, two small boys in black smocks clattered in, trundling a hoop which they dropped noisily in one corner. They murmured their prayer with one eye on *el Christo*, the other cast expectantly over their shoulders. Presently there was a distant clicking sound. Both *chicos* sprang to their feet, crossing themselves hastily as they ran out into the nave. The women rose and followed.

"Come, come," said our sacristan, and pulled me by the sleeve.

A group of worshippers had gathered before the west door, and were staring up at a grotesque clock above the triforium. A door flew open, and a mechanical figure with a leering face under a red cap popped out and struck the hour. With the last stroke, a sigh of satisfaction came from the onlookers. They turned to each other, smiled and nodded. The women folded their shawls more snugly, caught up their children and went away, having had "Papa Moses" blessing!

Burgos has some charming old houses in the Calle Fernán González, and the Street of the Furriers behind

the cathedral. The Casa del Cordón, which was built by the Constable who gave the richest chapel in the cathedral, has a lovely-gardened patio and a stairway nearly as rich as the *scala d'oro*. Its doorway with the coats of arms of the de Velascos and Mendozas joined by the Franciscan cord, is famous.

The steep hill that rises behind the town is crowned with the red walls of an ancient *castello*. We climbed up to it past the site of the Cid's house, now only a pile of stones, and the walled cemetery whose cypresses struck a sharp, solemn note against the red hillside. How familiar that silhouette is in the Spanish scene! A sharp hill, flat topped, rising abruptly from the olive-brown plain; a town straggling around the base of the hill between it and the deep river bed with cacti-choked banks and the ruins of a Moorish mill; a church tower, in the south roofed with blue *azulejos*, in the north with grey slate, or ruddy moss grown tile, dominating the town; and on the hill above, the crumbling bastions of a red-brown *castello;* black goats grazing on the barren hillside, a string of patient asses winding their way along the road; women kneeling on the river stones, blue and orange garments in the shallow pools, and arched over this a sky of cloudless blue like a turquoise dome.

The *castello* of Burgos is deserted and in ruins. It is the earliest capital, the original "castle" of Castile, and of the proudest flag in history. Fernán González built it; the Cid and Ximena were married there, and there the Cid had his historic argument with his sovereign which ended in his taking the king by the elbow and leading him down the hill to the tiny church of Santa Aguëda which stands there still, to swear "by

the bolt upon the door, by the cross above the altar, by the Gospel on the altar," that he was innocent of King Sancho's death.

We drove out to Las Huelgas, the abbey founded for noble ladies by that English Queen Eleanor who was sister to Cœur de Lion, wife to the hero of Las Navas de Tolosa, and grandmother to Saint Ferdinand . . . quite a career for one woman! Las Huelgas is written into the ancient history of Castile for St. Ferdinand was knighted, Alfonso the Wise crowned, and Edward I of England, then Prince of Wales, married in its chapel. The convent stands in a beech wood. It is a lovely Romanesque foundation, and the gentle air of neglect about its courtyard and lichened cloister only increased its romantic picturesqueness.

Alas, we were too late for the morning Mass when the nuns may be glimpsed through the *reja* of the choir kneeling between the tombs of thirteenth century kings and queens of Castile. The ladies of Las Huelgas are called "señoras doñas," not the humble "sisters" of other foundations.

Two small boys sprang up from nowhere and offered to show us about. As no one else seemed forthcoming, we accepted their guidance. They showed us the Moorish battle standard captured at Las Navas de Tolosa, and a bronze pulpit which was part of Spain's art exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair. Also some tombs in the porch which they informed us were those of the Cid's sons. They offered, for a peseta, to prove the truth of their assertion, and began tugging at the lids in advance of payment. The lids didn't seem very tight, so we gave them the peseta to let us off, and went on to Miraflores.

The famous Cartuja stands in a forest once a royal deer park. It was a hunting lodge of Juan II, the father of Isabella. He gave it to the Carthusians. The park was a-flutter with Spring green, and from the clearings rose the lazy smoke of the charcoal burners' fires. Lines of their thin, patient asses passed us, the wooden clapper of the lead ass sounding mournfully down the forest aisles.

King Juan and his queen, Isabella of Portugal, are buried magnificently within the *coro* of the Cartuja church. The two tombs, sixteen-sided and upheld by lions and escutcheons, are the work of Gil de Siloe. They are gorgeous examples of Spanish Renaissance sculpture, but I must confess they left us unenthusiastic. One thought of two gargantuan, frosted wedding cakes.

The church is divided into three parts, the first for the public, the second for the lay brothers, the *coro* for the white-cowled priests of the order. By the rule of St. Bruno, the monks are bound to silence except for two hours on Sunday, and for one other day in the week. Each has his own tiny house of three rooms, and his garden. Their lives are spent in study, meditation, prayer and the working of their gardens.

But no command of silence sealed the lips of the lay brother who left his spading to show us the church and cloister. The latter was rich in flowers, a cheerful, sheltered little close, gay with parrot tulips and bleeding hearts and blue lupins.

As we walked its paths, there came a ring at the gate. Two aged beggars stood without. Their rags had lost all resemblance to garments, they were merely tatters of many fabrics of many origins, bound about the withered limbs with string and wisps of dried grass.

A PEASANT WOMAN OF GALICIA ON THE ROAD TO SANTIAGO

Truly every country has the beggars it understands. These two ancient men leaning on their staves, peering out of rheumy eyes through the grey archway to the gentle garden close were legends come to life. Just so had we met them in a hundred ballads and folk tales.

Fray Hilario motioned them to wait on the bench beside the gate. Presently, there came a grave, white-robed Carthusian with a brown *cacharro* filled with rice and goats' milk and two horn spoons. He set it down on the curving seat in the lee of the wall, and the old men sat there and spooned up their pudding gratefully. Without speaking, the monk moved away across the quadrangle. Two others came as silently down the path and entered the chapel. They moved across that space of sunlit quiet like notes in a piece of music . . . a chord of Beethoven. Fray Hilario looked after them a moment, then leaned to whisper, "Two of them are Americans."

That was a *noche de alegria* in Burgos. The band played in the Paseo, and the Burgalese walked there with their wives and daughters under the May moon, and drank *horchatas* at the stand which a travelling Valencian had set up under the trees.

Very much later in the night I awoke. The noise that had roused me was not any of the usual disturances of the Spanish night, but a steady flowing sound like a great tide welling around the house walls. I got up and leaned over the balcony. The street below was filled with sheep . . . hundreds and hundreds of fleeces being driven in for the Friday wool market. The shepherds in flowing *mantas*, each with his crook, striding silently beside their flocks, the panting dogs at their heels, were priests of a ritual more ancient than Rome.

The moon was riding high over Burgos. It silvered the spires and the peaked grey roofs. Across the quiet river lay dark woods. Hidden deep in them was Miraflores. At this hour, while the stout Burgalese slumbered behind their glassed-in balconies, and the shepherds folded their flocks beside the river, the procession of white-clad monks would be coming down the unlighted path to the chapel. There for two midnight hours, those muted voices would be released in prayer and praise. I thought, as I have thought many times since then, of the two who were Americans, and wondered what unwritten tales of victory or defeat were hidden within those still cowls.

Venta de Baños does not mean *Baths for Sale*. It is the misleading soubriquet of a desolate and dirty railway junction set down on the flat plain of Castile where the line to Galicia and the Asturias branches from the main Madrid-Hendaye-Irun-Paris route. We landed there from Burgos with that everlasting luggage, in mid-afternoon. Our express for Vigo was due to leave shortly after midnight. Fortified with tickets and sleeping car passes, I sought out the baggage master to have the luggage checked in advance.

He reposed in a small bureau that bulged with *botas* of wine for shipment to Madrid. The distended black skins stood about like a ghastly headless herd of which he was the shepherd. He was an enormous man whose original energy had retired behind rolls upon rolls of fat. His chief concern seemed to be the large wart which flourished beside his left nostril, and from which grew a dozen long black hairs which he arranged to lie upon his cheek in a neat curl. He possessed, too, a lean,

hard, little wife whose privilege it was to move the bulkiest pieces of baggage, and whose semi-official capacity was indicated by a porter's cap worn atop her head kerchief, and a blue apron with a broad scarlet stripe.

I explained about the luggage and held out the tickets to Vigo. The baggage master made no motion to take them, in fact, he waved them away. "There was still much time," he said. "Many trains had still to pass Venta de Baños before the midnight *rápido* for Vigo."

But, I argued, I wished to rid myself of the care of the luggage. I wished to put it into his capable official hands . . .

He shook his head. Until these other trains had passed, he enumerated them, it was impossible for him to take up the matter of luggage for the midnight *rápido*. The *señorita* should return at half past eleven that night. Then he would weigh the baggage, and check it for the luggage van.

This, as I knew very well, was an altogether arbitrary arrangement. I said so; I argued; I insisted. The baggage master shrugged with the imperturbability of vested authority. "It is the custom, *Señorita*."

It wasn't the custom, and I knew it. I quoted the agent of wagon-lits from whom I had purchased the tickets in Madrid. He shrugged more effectively, and toyed with his wart. His wife leaned on her porter's broom, and muttered softly, upholding her lord.

The outcome of all this . . . and doubtless what the master and his aide fully intended . . . was that we rented a bedroom above the station. Most railway junctions in Spain have bedrooms to let to travellers. This room was small, and smelled of soot, but the beds

looked clean, and there was a lock to the door. There was also an enchanting JESU CHRISTO in a glass case . . . the figure of a small child in a nightshirt walking barefooted through a forest of twigs that blossomed with tissue paper roses, and on which perched innumerable tiny birds of colored wools. The lady porter brought the luggage up the stairs, and we locked it in while we went out to explore Venta de Baños.

It did not take long. The Venta of the name lay opposite the station . . . a wineshop, country store, farrier's, livery stable and garage combined. This, a few straggling cottages and the station was all. With three hours of daylight, we decided to hire a car and drive to Valladolid.

The driver took us first to the Baños of the name, a spring several miles east of the station. Recceswind, king of the Vizigoths, drank of its waters and was cured of the stone, and out of gratitude, he built a small church nearby. That was in 661. The stone building with its simple Romanesque door is still standing. It is the oldest Christian building in Spain. We drank of the spring, and found it clear and deliciously cold. There was a village near it of flat-roofed, windowless adobe houses like an Arizona Indian Pueblo. We noticed the clay ovens like giant beehives outside the houses. The rise of the plain was hollowed out to form enormous wine cellars.

Our way to Valladolid ran away to the southwest through Dueñas. Rows of cave dwellings were cut into the hill above the straggling town. These were not the dwellings of gypsies but of poor folk. It was in Dueñas that Isabella and Ferdinand had their first

meeting. She came riding from Valladolid. One look at Dueñas is sufficient evidence of the Princess' impatience to meet her bridegroom.

The road was rutted and ankle deep in mud from the recent rains. The car sluiced through it, sending spatters of red-brown liquid from both sides. At a bend, we slowed to crawl past a wagon, a great, gaunt ribbed cart like the weathered carcass of an ancient ship. It had a full, spreading top of brown canvas. Dark faces peered at us between the cart's ribs, and the driver drew his mules back on their haunches, and stood up and shouted. "Gypsies," said our chauffeur. *Erraté* folk, perhaps, on their annual pilgrimage to do homage to Mary Sarah of Saintes Maries de la Mer at Camargues in Provence. There are many of them in Castile. Our chauffeur said that the old woman who sat on the tail of the cart leading two horses was a *zahori*, a diviner of secret things.

Valladolid lies tucked in a great hollow which ages of winds and rains have worn in the Castilian plain. The Pisuerga curves about it in a loose embrace. We had just one golden hour. We had come not for cathedrals or churches, but for three houses which have shelterd much of the heart of Spain . . . the simple old palace opposite San Pablo's church where Ferdinand and Isabella were married, and where Philip II was born; the little house on the unromantic Calle Miguel Iscar where the greatest romance in all literature flowed from Cervantes' pen, and the house where Columbus died.

Cervantes' house has been made a national monument. It is charming, set back from the street in a little sunken court roofed with vines. The rooms are

filled with furniture that belonged to the great man. The smoke of the Don's roast pigeons blackens the kitchen chimney.

The house where Columbus, broken spirited and disgraced, came to end his days, in the street now called by his name, has suffered a less noble fate. It is a tenement and shop. A sign beside the door reads ASSES' MILK FOR SALE. Valladolid has put up a hideous modern monument to the Master Mariner. The sight of such memorials makes one realize how great the man is to overtop the mere tonnage of so much stone and bronze.

Coming back to Venta de Baños, we made a detour to Palencia. The red-brown town girdled in trees lying by its river like an oasis in the plain, looked charming from a distance. But on close inspection, we found it a drab and dejected place. Though it was nearly seven o'clock, the streets were without any of the busy life of most Spanish towns at that hour. Palencia has a Gothic cathedral, very fine in the pointed style within, and entered by a beautiful flamboyant door in the south transept. The west front was never completed, and is just a blank wall. They were preparing for a *fiesta* of some sort for the walls of the nave were hung with fine Flemish tapestries similar to those we had seen in Segovia. Their greys and blue greens and dull ruddy golds were wonderful in effect against the rough stone wall under the pale sunset light.

The sacristan was a grumpy person with his dinner on his mind. He did not encourage us to linger. He stood at the head of the short flight of steps when we went down to the subterranean church below the *coro* and rattled his keys crossly. The tiny, stone-walled

sanctuary below the present cathedral was a Vizigothic church. It may even date from Roman times before Constantine when the persecution of Christians was carried on in Roman colonies in Spain. A tiny spring bubbles in a crude font in one corner.

When we came clear of the winding streets of Palencia, the sunset had burnished the plain. All the candles in the west blazed behind us. They lighted the olive-brown plain with the incomparable pomp of eve. It was no longer dreary, but proud, and high, and full of majesty.

A peasant returning from the wool market in Burgos turned out for us to pass. He had two ewes, their feet tied together, and suspended like that which depends from the collar of the Golden Fleece, slung one on either side of his donkey while he sat enthroned above their plaintive bleatings. A group of field laborers with their wooden rakes and primitive hoes held over their shoulders, marched in single file along a rise in the plain; at the door of a cave dwelling a woman stood and looked away to the west, shading her eyes with her hand. Suddenly, she stooped and caught up her child. She lifted him high above her head toward the glowing west.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

ON THE ROAD OF SAINT JAMES

THERE was a sentimental value to every *tortilla* now that the end of our Spanish adventure loomed so close.

But not even sentiment could render palatable the one which the baggage master's daughter brought us. She set the platter down with a finality that permitted no questions, and retired to stare at us mistrustfully through the window of the door leading into the kitchen.

There followed on the omelet the inevitable stewed kidneys (goats', I suspected, from their likeness to knobs of leather), fried brains, a hillock of boiled greens drenched in lukewarm olive oil, and a basket of oranges.

"They manage these things better in France," said the Good Sport.

At least the oranges were edible. We retired with them to our room, like the Cranbrook ladies, and lay down on the beds. One of us slept.

Shortly before midnight the baggage master's wife woke us up and manœuvered us and the baggage downstairs into the presence of her lord. The wineskins had gone on to their destination and he seemed slightly bereft there in his den, but he sat in immoveable dignity while his wife weighed the baggage, chalked it and

presented it piece by piece across the counter for him to affix the stamp.

After a Spanish market commend me to a Spanish railway station for *cosas de España.*

A "mixed train from the Asturias" lumbered in and a company of young military recruits tumbled out of the third class carriages and bivouaced for the night on the platform. Two young peasant women, very round and firm and rosy, and burdened with a dozen live hens tied by the legs, bundles tied up in colored handkerchiefs and a roll of bedding, proceeded to make themselves comfortable among the soldiery. A romantic youth whose sole possessions seemed to be a guitar and a roving eye, and a priest in a trailing and ragged soutane and a moth-eaten beaver hat found seats along the station wall. All these were waiting for the *rápido* to Zaragoza which was due about four in the morning.

The priest tipped his hat over his eyes and philosophically went to sleep. The guitarist caressed his instrument. His fingers plucked a series of seductive chords which drew the daughter of the baggage master to lean across the sill of the restaurant window. The roving eye did the rest.

Our train came at last and we mounted the awkward step to the wagon-lit. There was the usual shrill whistling and clanging of bells incidental to the departure of Spanish trains. Through our compartment window we had a last glimpse of Venta de Baños. The baggage master's wife leaned exhaustedly against the luggage barrow. Her lord had waddled to the door whence he surveyed the groups on the platform benignly. With satisfaction he caressed his wart.

We passed Léon some time in the early morning. I regret Léon. There is the cathedral of course, and there was too, the portly stationer with whom I danced at the wedding feast at Avila. I would have liked to have bought at least a post card from him.

But it was a toss up between our stopping there for a full day and having our last Sunday in Spain at Santiago. And like good Spaniards we had cried "Ho! for St. James." Léon joins Zamora, Zaragoza, Cuenca, Oviedo and Sepulveda on our list of "PLACES TO BE VISITED WHEN NEXT WE TAKE TO THE SPANISH ROAD."

I hung out of the window and looked back wistfully at Léon. The moon had gone down, but the massive Roman walls and the bulk of the cathedral loomed sombrely against a star-swept sky. The Milky Way arched over the towers coming in from the Pyrenees to end in Galicia, as Charlemagne beheld it in his dream.

The Spaniards call that starry pathway *el camino de Santiago*, the Road of St. James. They say it perpetuates that greatest of all the pilgrim ways of the middle ages, *el camino francés* which led to the tomb of Santiago. When;

> Pilgrims and palmers plighted together
> To seek St. James in Spain and St. Peter in Rome.
> They went on their way with many a wise tale;
> (And had leave to lie all their life after).

The road began at St. Jean-Pied-du-Port and crossed the Pyrenees by the Pass of Roncesvalles. It traversed Spanish Navarre through Pamplona and Carrión; thence due west to Léon and Astorga, crossing the mighty bridge of twenty arches where Suero de Quinones

and his nine comrades stood for ten days challenging every knight who passed on the way to the jubilee gathering at Santiago. At Monforte the road swung northward to Lugo and so into the mountains to Compostela.

It was to be our route for much of the way. Beyond Monforte the railway would leave it, but when we drove from Vigo to the shrine we would pick it up again.

Our first glimpses of Galicia under the sunshine of a May morning filled us with delight. We were crossing slowly, with many puffings and snortings of our fat little engine, the famous Pass of Fuencebadon. The sun sparkled on the chestnut forests that clothed the lower hills. The railway wound in and out of mountain gorges, each curve giving new vistas of high peaks glorious with heather and golden broom, of deep valleys where streams tumbled over mighty boulders. There were small, tilled fields along the streams and women working in them. Their blue and crimson and orange head kerchiefs bloomed like exotic blossoms. They worked in companies of four or five, swinging their crude wooden hoes in rhythm. They straightened and stood looking up at the train as it rumbled slowly by on trestles above their heads. A cart drawn by a yoke of fawn-colored bullocks toiled along a road that curved around the fat paunch of a mountain. The isolated farmsteads were like Swiss chalets. Their wooden upper stories projected far beyond the lower half which was of stone, crudely plastered.

The train had developed over-night a Spanish leisureliness and sociability. It was no longer a disdainful *rápido*, but comfortably "mixed." It meandered through the green hill country — no lack of forests here or of

water either — stopping at every station and for many minutes while the guards passed the time of day with whoever happened to be about, and the passengers descended to buy *café con leche* and *churros* from the vendors. It was the best mode of contemplative travel after Ximena.

At Ponferrada a wedding party boarded the train. The bride and groom had come directly from the church escorted by the priest and all the relatives. Among these was one man in very full knee breeches, long brown gaiters and fluttering scarlet garters. Above a tight, broad leather belt he wore a sleeveless leather jerkin and a very wide and picturesquely slouching hat. He was a Maragato, a descendant of the "Moorish Goths" who are reputed to have sided with the infidels though retaining their own religion. Ever since, these people have retained their tribal autonomy. They live in the mountains south of Astorga. They gather in that city for their *fiestas* and dance their ancient tribal dance "*el canizo*" in the market place on the feast of Corpus. The dance is doubtless Provençal in origin and not unlike the Catalan *sardana*. There is a statue of a Maragato in his festal dress holding a weathercock atop the cathedral of Astorga.

These men are the best *arrieros* in Spain and renowned for their honesty. They may be met on any road in the north driving their long trains of pack mules bringing cargoes from Gijon and La Coruña to Léon and even to Madrid.

The bride clutched her tight bouquet of white stocks and carnations in white, cotton-gloved hands. She was hatless, of course, and the rest of her costume was of serviceable dark serge. Her feet were squeezed into

unaccustomed tight slippers of patent leather with excruciating high heels. The groom was being very careful of the bridal suitcase, made of some shiny material like tin, but iridescent in stripes of pink and purple and green. Both were typical Gallegos — short and square. Their round dull faces showed no gleam of vitality. It is a type that resembles the peasants of Northern Europe more than the aquiline Spaniards. The Gallegos are the dullest and hardest working people in Spain. They have none of the tattered effrontery of the south.

Indeed, instead of tatters, they go patched to an incredible degree of thriftiness. There was a boy strolling along the platform at the edge of the wedding crowd, whose blue cotton jacket had left not more than a quarter yard of its original fabric. Whole sections of other coats of other cloths had been added to it. The right shoulder was of grey serge, the left pocket of homespun, both elbows were turned out in velveteen. One ached in thought over the care with which those patches had been applied. An Andalusian might wear with grace a coat no more whole, but it would have no patches save those supplied by his own sun-warmed skin.

I take it that a Gallega's pride is known by the patches her husband can boast.

We began now to drop down out of the mountains. South of us lay the high piled Sierra "of the Cat's Tail." At Orense the Minho came out of the north and ran along on our left marking the border between Portugal and Spain. Orense enjoys a monopoly on the manufacture of knife grinders' whistles. Most Spanish towns concentrate on the making of some one thing and

it is seldom that another town enters into rivalry with them. But knife grinders' whistles — we had heard them again and again in various places, a shrill, clear high piping, a curiously gay little tune that was the signal to houseowners to come out with their knives. And all those jaunty little pipings, going on all over Spain, had their origin in Orense . . .

The railway ran along close beside the Minho, close enough for us to call across to Portugal. The river is a salmon stream, deepening now and again into still, brown pools. It is a popular resort for fishermen. That its pools yield more than salmon we know for at Arbó a woman trotted along beside the carriage windows holding up an enormous eel. It was fully five feet long and the thickness of a stout forearm.

Our interest in it, which was purely zoological, stirred a false hope in her. She thrust it, squirming, through the open window of our compartment.

"*Diez pesetas, señoras, diez pesetas,*" she cried enticingly.

I had a momentary alarm lest she drop the creature all wet and slippery and very much alive and protesting, into our laps.

"*No quiero,*" I cried. "No. No. We go to America—"

"*America! Madre de Dios!*" she retrieved the eel hastily, pulling it in, hand over hand as a sailor pulls a rope, and pressed it safe against her ample bosom.

The train moved off.

Truly, to have brought an eel to Vigo would have been to carry coals to Newcastle. The sharp, exciting tang of the sea floated over the town, a tang in which smells of fish, tar, rotting planks, bilge water and garlic were commingled.

Vigo has a new town, quite uninteresting, and an old town by the harbor rim where all the briny business of the sea comes and goes under one's nose.

We had chosen a hotel there. There are two. "Which ever one you go to, you will wish you had tried the other," we had been told. Of the other I can say nothing save that its coffee was slightly better and its butter slightly worse than that offered by our hostelry. I breakfasted in both for the sake of comparison.

Ours gave us an enormous room crammed with furniture after the manner considered correct by Spanish innkeepers (this even included a bath tub in one corner with a low wooden screen placed around it, but no flow of water in the pipes); and a wide window on a balcony that overlooked the bay so that we had sea craft moving under sail and steam by day, and at night constellations of bobbing red and green lights. Vigo's harbor is perpetually busy. In two days we counted two French, one Dutch and one English steamer that dropped anchor under our balcony.

A ragged island blocks the sea gate leaving two entrances, one to the north, one to the south. Within, after a long neck, the harbor widens magnificently. The chestnut-forested hills crowd down to the water's edge. Tiny white hamlets perch on the hills and along the rim, and innumerable snub-nosed scows, painted blue, and with hoarse engines, chug back and forth bringing fisher and farmer folk on their errands. We watched one put out. A dozen men and four great cream-colored oxen stood amidships, and along the gunwale sat a row of women. Their yellow head kerchiefs nodded like marigolds.

Out of the north gate King Philip's Armada sailed to

disaster. Half the forests of Galicia were felled to build it.

We noticed a marked absence of donkeys. In their place were the hardy little Gallegan ponies with hairy fetlocks and tangled manes. All that they do not carry goes forward on the women's heads.

Surely, nowhere else in the world, do women carry such towering loads. Three-quarters of one's own height is deemed a fair proportion. The Vigo basket — each town had its own favorite pattern which is rigorously adhered to — is woven of stout willow withes. It is round and deep — from twelve to eighteen inches deep like a great drum. Into this are piled cabbages, up and up, to what would seem perilous heights. And atop the cabbages, like as not, are laid four or five fine *merluzas* weighing several pounds apiece.

At six, when the fishing fleet puts in, there is a hurrying clatter and clop-clop of sabots on the stones as the women go down to the quay. The crescent of fishermen's houses along the harbor rim turn ochreous and ruddy fronts to the west. Doors and windows are splashed with blue as though the sea were impatient of entrance there. Heaps of brown seines and piles of cork, baskets and upturned boats clutter the strand between the houses and the sea. Three very old women stitch slowly at a wide-stretched-out brown sail.

The boats drift in lazily, their pinions furled. There are cries across the narrowing expanse of water. Several of the boats have been out for days, one a whole fortnight, all the way to Cadiz and back, selling a catch in both ports. The ropes are cast, made fast. Then the men leap ashore. They stretch, roll themselves *cigarrillos*, drop down gratefully on the heaps of nets and

play idly with the children while their women unload the boats. These have their skirts tied back under sailcloth aprons; bare red ankles appear between aprons and sabots. They dip baskets of fish from the tanks and pass them hand over hand to other women squatting on the quay who sort, chop off the heads and scale them. The air glitters with flying silver scales. The fish are packed into crates, the lids nailed down, and these loaded on board the cars which have been run down to the waterside in readiness for the haul.

Tomorrow night Madrid will dine.

The quay is alive with comings and goings and a press of sea-stained blue jerseys. But though there is much excitement, there is no gaiety. The business of the sea is grave business. There is the day's price on sardines to be fixed. The catch is small. A fat commission merchant argues with the master of the boat from Cadiz. Finally they agree — for two well heaped up baskets— seventy-two pesetas. "*Muy caro!*" says the commission merchant but the ship's master stands firm beside his baskets.

In one heap, thrown out on the stones of the quay, are the odd, unnamed bits of weird sea treasures — pink and purple and green, to be lifted on sticks and wondered at —

When we drove out from Vigo next morning it was a shininh Sunday. A brisk breeze ruffled the blue waters of the bay and tossed the poppies in the fields through which we passed. The chestnut forests glistened.

The road followed the curve of the inner harbor crossing tiny inlets into Pontevedra. An ancient seaport, Pontevedra: settled, they say, by a colony of

Greeks under Teucer the Telemonian. Ruins of a *faro* that served to light Phœnician mariners on their way to the tin mines of Cornwall, crown the rocks of the promontory. The tide was out that morning and the boats stood awkwardly on the sands where women waded far out digging mussels and *grabos*. There was a knot of women about the fountain filling their water tubs. Literally, tubs, for Pontevedra disdains clay vessels and carries its water in stout oaken tubs three feet high, smaller at the top than at the base, and clamped with bands of copper and brass. These march as majestically atop the women's heads as the clay *cántaros* of Estremadura.

The country roundabout Pontevedra is very fertile. It yields two crops a year. Orchards of lemons, oranges, almonds and medlars climb the slopes to meet the chestnut groves. The fields beyond the villages are planted in vineyards. Alone of all the people of Spain, the Gallegos grow their grapes on arbors upheld by tall slabs of quarried stone. They fence their fields with these same stone slabs laid edge to edge to present a blank face to the would-be trespasser. The small cabins, *chozas*, have deeply recessed lower stories with a wall reaching out to form a convenient and miry byre. The ponies and bullocks stand there with the crude, boat-shaped wagons. These are perfectly flat with long pointed prows and solid wooden wheels. The loads are held in place by sticks that fit in holes drilled along either side. We met them piled high with fagots and the first hay crop, drawn by great, fawn-colored bullocks, with a man or a woman walking alongside the beasts. They represent Galicia's chief mode of transport. It would be difficult to find anything more primitive.

Our driver rejoiced in the romantic name of Angel Eugenio Antolinez. He was moreover of a sociable turn of mind. He kept calling out to those farmer folk we met on their way to market — a man driving a yoke of bullocks, a woman switching a young pig before her. She had tied a stout cord around one of its ears and with this for a curb and the switch for an encourager they were proceeding at a smart pace. We met too, three girls in Sunday finery, each with a broad-brimmed, straw *jipijapa* perched atop her snugly bound head kerchief. The girls walked barefoot but they carried their stout leather shoes to put on when they came to the town. With them Angel Eugenio entered into a long and hilarious conversation, turning to wink at us after each sally as though to include us in the repartee, which being conducted in *gallegan* was beyond our powers of comprehension.

With a final shot that set the three to giggling shrilly, and elbowing each other across the road, Angel started the car again, only to draw up presently at a farm house. He took a package from under the seat and tootled vigorously on the horn to call the family out.

They came crowding around us; two young women, each with a baby in her arms and a flock of small children about her skirts, and a broad-beamed middle-aged man in a leather jacket with facings of green cloth. He opened the car door and invited us to descend and to come into the vineyard which surrounded the *choza*. Under the high trained vines were set a rough table and two benches.

The farmer shouted a command to one of the women and she went into the house returning presently with a straw-covered *demi-juana* of wine and several glasses.

She, it evolved, was his daughter-in-law, and the wife of Angel Eugenio who was the farmer's son by a first marriage. The other woman was a second wife. The two families of two generations lived in patriarchal simplicity under one roof and vine and fig tree. We wondered how they disposed themselves in the narrow confines of the cabin.

The women pushed forward their children naming them for us, a young Angel, and Juanito, Fernán, Pepa, Casilda, Guilhen, and a preternaturally solemn baby who rejoiced in the name of Hilaria. And as always, the questions came: Had we children? Of what ages? What was our relationship? Our names? Our ages? *Aie* — they surveyed the Good Sport with amazement and loud spoken admiration —

At such an age —

The Second Wife caught me by the arm, "*Está muy guapa!*"

The farmer suffered all this with masculine tolerance for the foibles of women. Angel Eugenio sprawled contentedly in the sun with the youngest Angel tickling his chin with a straw. Then the farmer began to speak of America. Two sons of his were there. The Gallegos, we knew, form the largest proportion of the emigrant class of Spain.

Where were they? we asked.

Miguel was in Montevideo. Gil, who was a *mecánico* and growing rich, Gil lived in —. He struggled with the name then waved his daughter-in-law toward the house. When she came back she presented us with a picture post card of the City Hall of Scranton, Pa. This was accepted by the family as the residence of the prosperous Gil.

I explained that the building was the *Ayuntamiento*, and that "el Scranton" was a city *muy rico*. The family nodded in aquiescence. This, one gathered, was to be expected, and no more than Gil's due.

The announcement that we were on our way to Santiago met with general approbation. Santiago was "*muy rico, muy fino, muy resplandeciente*," all agreed. But we should see it at the *fiesta* of Corpus, now three weeks off. Then, to see Santiago with the great procession winding through the streets following the silver car in which was the Host, and the priests and acolytes and the swinging censers, and the singing, and all the people throwing pieces of flowering broom before the wheels of the car . . . .

Ah, we should see it then.

But at Corpus we would be far away in another land.

Before we went the farmer showed us his granary. Like others we had noticed along the road it was of stone, set high on posts, and shaped like a little church with pointed gable and a cross at the end — a Celtic cross, too, which is a point for philologists and anthropologists to ponder over, and beautifully softened by golden lichens.

It was but a short league from the Antolinez's *choza* into Padrón. The village lies along a tiny stream. There was a green, grassy plaza before the church on which stood an old, old pilgrimage cross. It dated from the twelfth or thirteenth century. The base was ornamented with skulls and cross bones and the shaft with carved figures of kings and saints and weird, apocalyptic animals.

Padrón's market surged around it, bullocks to the

right, goats to the left, and pigs under everyone's feet, squealing protestingly under the proddings of prospective buyers. Along a tree-lined avenue beside the church the Cheap John stands were set up, tinware and tinsel jewelry flashed in the sun, the country girls walked arm in arm between the stalls considering the lengths of pink and yellow calico for the approaching Corpus. They too, wore their straw hats on top of their kerchiefs. Padrón's market yielded us one *cacharro* more — a distinctive jug of olive-brown ware marked dramatically with the burns of the embers. This is a ware typical of Galicia, and we had not seen it elsewhere in Spain.

Padrón claims to have been the favorite residence of St. James, who, they say, was seen rowing his stone boat on its stream. Its marked our emergence once more upon *el camino de Santiago*. Its cross was only one of many we were to pass in the three leagues between Padrón and Compostela. Many were along the road, but others stood off at a little distance marking the track of the earlier "way" and bowered now in flowering broom and tall, yellow foxgloves.

Is there any tale more enthralling than the story of a road? If most of the world's greatest books have had to do with journeys, that is because the road itself became the hero. For, after all, a road is about the closest that man builds to immortality. Buildings date. They belong to this period or that; they are subservient to the men who live in them. With the centuries they become relics to be stared at, worth a peseta at the most. But a road is of all ages. Its life is the unbroken stream of human existence. Ages come and go along its way, but it belongs to no age; it remains greater than them all.

When you tread its stones you are one in a great procession of chariots and horsemen, one with kings and conquerors, with slave and soldier, pilgrim, beggar and bandit.

We had already tasted the dust of four of the great high roads of Spain; Hannibal's Road along the eastern shore from Cartagena to the Col de Perthus; the road of Cæsar Augustus from Tarragona toward Lérida and Zaragoza, — the great Julius marched his legions that way to give battle to Pompey; the Vía Plata through Estremadura, and the Way of Allah and his servant Abd-er-Rahman across Andalusia to the bridge and the mosque of Cordova.

And now the Way of saint and knight and palmer.

There is still preserved in the Cluny museum in Paris a copy of the oldest guide book extant — It was prepared sometime in the thirteenth century for pilgrims to Santiago. It set forth routes and resting places, shrines and danger spots to be avoided. It decreed, too, that each pilgrim should stop at the quarry of Triacastella near Lugo and there take up a stone which he must carry on to Compostela for the building of the city. Remembering this, the reason for the frequency of the crosses and the safe resting places beside them became evident.

Other folk than holy pilgrims travelled this way. Between Padrón and Santiago we passed the church of Esclavitud long famous as a refuge for criminals fleeing justice. It stands lonely on its hill, the steep mountains forming a back drop behind its grey walls. A double flight of steps ornamented with fine balustrades and stone balls leads up to its terrace. A wayside shrine is built into the base of the hill beside the steps for the

benefit of those too leg weary to make the climb. But the church proved worth the effort. It was spacious and empty with a side door that opened on a green lawn guarded on three sides by grey stone farm buildings, the sheep were there nibbling the churchyard grass, tended by a little girl with a scarlet kerchief bound about her head. And there was no one, nothing else, in sight. Beside the altar hung two modern paintings of Gallegan peasants at prayer. I could not get close enough to read the artist's name, but the hand was powerful and assured, and the painting very flat and rich and dark, the peasant faces grave and reverent, and in the background there were the heavy flanks of bullocks.

It was worth climbing the steps, too, for the view from the terrace across rolling fields to the blue cliffs of "the wild Cantabrian shore," and between the hills a vista of the shimmering Atlantic.

Compostela — philologists disagree whether this really means "field of the stars" (the advantage of being not a philologist but a traveller in romance is that one can take the Charlemagne legend for truth and say "of course it does") —sits high. It is a city all of stone. Apparently the quarry of Triacastella did not give out and the pilgrims, we know, were plentiful. Time and weather have kindled the blocks into hues of russet and gold. The lichens spread vividly along the roofs and pinnacles of the cathedral, and the great western front blazes with a sunset grandeur. Stone-paved streets run between very high, brown stone houses that are built out over arcades to form deep cloister walks on either side. The townsfolk walking there wear a grave and reverend air, the shops grow clerically inclined. And again and again, carved above portals and at the

tops of columns is the scallop shell of pilgrims. But all streets converge to the Cathedral Shrine.

Two things impress the traveller at first sight of the great church — its color, it glows in the sun like an October beech forest, and its size, as it rises above the slanting brown roofs of the little city with its gorgeous baroque tower, its pinnacles and state stairways, its statues of the kings and saints of Spain. Surely it were big enough to purchase heaven for Charlemagne. There is a legend that when the Emperor appeared at Heaven's bar, Satan cast his sins into the balance. The sins were not inconsiderable and the balance went dangerously low; but Saint James came by and cast the church of Compostela into the other balance, which so turned the scales that Carlo Magno rode straightforward in at the pearly gates with no more questions asked.

Truth compels me to admit that that was the first church of which now only a few foundation stones remain. The Moors sacked it when they carried away its bells to make lamps for the mesquita of Cordova. Of the still greater cathedral that followed, the plan remains, the nave and aisles with their strong stone vaulting, and the marvellous Romanesque doorway, the Portico de la Gloria with its statue of the apostle in the centre surrounded by the company of the elders and saints and angels. Through its central portal John of Gaunt entered in pomp to be crowned King of Castile by right of his marriage to the daughter of Pedro the Cruel. The Black Prince knew it well, he was often in Galicia dipping a finger in Spanish politics. Through it passed that ceaseless stream of pilgrims through four centuries — the flower and the strength of Europe.

The High Mass was concluded, but we were in time for a full throated burst of Gregorian chant, and the procession of clergy as they poured in a stream of crimson and purple and blue and gold out of the sanctuary gates and down the aisles between the stout stone columns.

The eldest Angel Antolinez had spoken well. It was of a truth, "*resplandeciente*."

The tomb of the saint is in a small chapel below the high altar. It is all of silver as is also the statue of the "Son of Thunder" above the retable. And in the Plaza of the Silversmiths by the south tra sept tiny silver replicas of this were offered for sale to devout pilgrims.

Everywhere that we walked it was to find streets torn up and heaps of stones along the edges of yawning ditches. Compostela, after ten centuries, sanitizes itself. We came back to the plaza before the great west front of the cathedral.

Here is the full glory of the baroque. I for one would not forego one florid curlicue. No, not for all the Gothic of Toledo or Burgos — it is so essentially Spain, this weight of golden grandeur. Gothic art was transmontane, but this is Spain's own. It is the music of Esclava, the gorgeous panoply of the *semana santa*, the frank paganism of the *romerías* and peasant dances, the pomp and gilded circumstance of the Hapsburgs, all that to most eyes is Spain — carved in that glowing golden face.

And this set like a screen before the unyielding, dour, grey stones of the Romanesque portico —

Yes, the face of Santiago is the face of all Spain.

The plaza was very quiet in the sun. No traffic came

there. Only the pigeons preened and strutted on the cathedral steps between the statues of the kings.

And then, as was altogether fitting, there came a pilgrim. She was an old woman, so old that it seemed she must have passed Time on the way. One eye was gone, the other peered out between tangles of long, grisly hair. Her feet were bound in rags, her withered body on which fluttered tags of garments whose original meaning had long since been lost, leaned upon a stick. She was horrible to the pitch of magnificence. Art could not have added one thing more.

She hobbled around the corner of the church into the sun and sank down on the steps of the golden staircase, as one who has reached the end of the road. She sat there, blinking in the sun, and mumbling to herself. She was the final perfect touch. Spain had been good to us to the last.

The hotel had given us a lunch. We opened it now — two potato omelets, stone cold and treacherously heavy some slices of cold meat, six rolls, oranges —

How many meals like this we had partaken of in how many places along the road! And this was our last — it was like a sacrament.

"Will we come back?"

"We must."

"I wish I could be sure. There ought to be a fountain here like the one in Rome, in which one could drop a 'fat dog' and wish. I feel the need of a ceremony."

"Let's invent one."

We set aside two rolls, two slices of chicken, and the oranges for ourselves. The rest we folded into the napkin. We took it across the plaza to where the aged pilgrim crouched upon the steps.

I dropped it into her lap.

"*Por l'amor de Dios, y por Santiago,*" I said.

"*Viva l'España,*" added the Good Sport.

The Ancient One opened the napkin. One by one, she took up the *tortillas*, the meat — *pollo!* the blessed white bread. She kissed each roll reverently. Then she stood up. She raised her crutch above our heads invoking Heaven and St. James. She spoke. A long rolling volume of sound came from that toothless mouth.

A family going home to a late luncheon stopped and listened gravely, studying us . . .

Did they guess that they were witnessing a ritual?

We were very quiet on the way home. In the morning the Roussillon would come steaming into the harbor and we would go aboard and sail out at the ea gate in the wake of Philip's caravels, our faces turned to the west.

Behind us stretched three thousand miles of the Spanish road.

It had been a good road, it had given us sun-warmed adventure. . . .

"We had travelled in the print of ancient wars
Yet all the land was green;
And love we found, and peace . . ."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

A CHAPTER BY THE GOOD SPORT

HE Writer has left the final word to me. Ever since we came back from travelling the road through Spain, there are any number of questions that people have asked us about the practical details of such a motor trip. I suppose that is because, while most of Europe is familiar motoring ground to Americans, Spain has long been considered more adventurous territory, especially for women motorists without a man in the party. We heard of another party of an American mother and daughter who were doing this, but we never met them. We heard, too, in Valencia of an American girl who was making a tour of Spain on a bicycle. How I should like to have met her!

This seems to be the time and the place to answer out of the facts and figures in my notebook some of the practical questions about a motor tour in Spain.

Here they are:

1. Why Ximena?

Well, Ximena, as every one knows who has read the story of the Cid, was a very faithful and indomitable helpmate. Like young Lochinvar, "she stayed not for stick and she stayed not for stone." She accompanied her lord on his expeditions from one end of Spain to the other. No other lady in history, save Isabella *la*

católica and Saint Theresa, covered so many miles of Spanish road.

Our Ximena was middle-aged when she left her home garage for her Spanish adventure. She had done three years faithful service on rough Putnam County roads in America, but she took us through Spain without a real mishap or a single puncture. Three times we had to have her brakes lined, but that was all. I think there was a wistfulness and a telltale moisture about her radiator when the two Valencians drove her away from our hotel door in Madrid. I know there was about our eyes.

2. What about Spanish Roads? Are they good for motoring?

Yes. Most of them are dirt roads, and very well made. True, the hairpin curves and the lack of any retaining walls on roads that run along the ledges of mountains caused me a good many breathless moments; I don't recommend them for elderly people with weak hearts and timorous natures. But the road bed is almost always good. Here and there, especially in the south and around Valencia, we struck stretches of worn-out roads, but the heaps of stone along the side told that repairs were in order at least . . . *mañana!* However, all of the way, including that section between Velez-Rubio and Granada, which the Michelin Guide calls "impassable in time of rains," was no worse than some of our own back-country roads at home. It all depends on what you are accustomed to. A man came up to us in the hotel patio in Seville. He had heard us talking to the proprietor about garage accommodation. He wanted to know how we dared drive around Spain "in a flivver." He asked us if we carried revolvers.

THE GOOD SPORT AND XIMENA AT ITALICA

THE PUERTA SANTA AT THE GREAT CHURCH OF SANTIAGO DE CAMPOSTELA

He had left his own car, a three thousand dollar model, on the Riviera because he was fearful of driving himself and his wife from Nice to Seville.

He seemed disappointed because we could not produce a single misadventure out of our two months experience.

But then, he came from Chicago.

About the safety . . . we soon learned that we were safer on the Spanish *carretera* than on many an American highway. There were few other motorists driving at breakneck speed. There are no suspicious characters abroad, because everyone in Spain — native and foreign alike — must carry papers of identification, and these are examined by the Guardia Civiles at frequent intervals. These guards in their amusing patent leather hats turned up sharply behind . . . on every hot days they wear veils hanging down from them after the style made memorable by Queen Victoria . . . are to be seen at nearly every crossroad, bridge and railroad crossing. They are the guardians of all travellers.

As for finding the way, in the towns one looks for the sign *TRAVESIA* which means the thoroughfare through the settlement. The maps in the Michelin Guide, and those which the Real Automóvil Club de España are happy to furnish to foreign motorists suffice for routes.

3. What does it cost?

All travel in Spain is more expensive than travel in France. Motor travel is more expensive because of the high cost of gasoline. Hotel rates vary from fifteen pesetas to twenty-five pesetas. Of course, this does not mean the Ritz in Madrid, or the equally elegant Alfonso XIII in Seville.

The rate is for full pension, which includes meals. The charge at a *fonda* is usually seven pesetas. At a *posada*, where we never had to put up (to the Writer's ill concealed regret) three pesetas. The peseta is normally equal to seventeen cents in American money.

The garages charge from three to five pesetas for storing the car overnight, and the same for washing it. For gasoline, over which the government exercises a monopoly, we paid sixty centimos, about ten cents, a litre. There are four and a quarter litres to a gallon, which makes the cost of gasoline per gallon approximately forty-five cents.

Here is a condensed account of our expenses:

Transportation of car, uncrated, from New York to Barcelona	$105.00
Port charges in Barcelona	44.50
Carnets and Foreign Driving Licenses obtained by the Automobile Club of America for its members	80.00
Permisos, for a car of foreign registration— Good for three months	25.50
Garage charges and tips	60.00
Repairs	28.00
Gasoline and oil	72.00
	$415.00

Time: From Barcelona to Madrid, thirteen weeks.
Distance covered in the car — 1640 miles.

At Spanish ports there is always a charge for taking one's car from the boat and through the Customs. But I believe ours would have been less if we had been shrewder and had not employed a customs broker.

4. What things should one take for such a trip?

If you are going to Spain in winter or early Spring . . . and March, April and May are the months for Spain . . . then you will need warm clothing. Not so much for outdoor wear, but for wear in the hotels which are not comfortable according to our American ideas of comfort. Most of them do have central heating, but it isn't very vigorous, and the stone floors and high rooms become clammily cold after the sun goes down. In Burgos, even in May, one needed cloth dresses indoors. And woolens to wear at night. And a hot water bottle. Once, we left ours behind at an inn, and did not discover the loss until the next day. Then we went back and retrieved it. The landlady looked frightfully disappointed. I suspect she had enjoyed a really warm bed for the first time in her life.

If you are going to picnic along the roadside, which is the nicest way, and much the best for your health since two Spanish meals can be eaten with impunity only by Spaniards, you will want a small camp kit of some sort, including a Sterno stove, in which to make tea and bouillon. And it is wise to carry bottled drinking water. We got a basket and fitted it up with picnic equipment. Each driving day when we left the hotel, we put in a bottle or two of Solares water, and if our pension rate included luncheon, we asked the hotel for a picnic lunch which we ate along the road. This is a sensible economy too, for the restaurant charges are heavy even in poor hotels, and there are very few small restaurants such as one finds in France and other European countries.

One thing more — as almost no women in Spain drive cars, and as foreigners are always more or less of a

curiosity, women tourists always suffer considerable annoyance from being stared at on the streets in the smaller places where few tourists go. The real reason for this is that English and American clothes seem peculiar to eyes that are unaccustomed to see a woman wear a hat, or dress in colors. If one wants to mingle inconspicuously in the Spanish crowd and so enjoy the Spanish scene, then one needs black or dark blue clothes, and a black hat, or no hat at all.

In Valencia during the Fallas, the Writer wore a black dress and a black *mantilla*, and though she went out, so she said, feeling as though she were going to take part in a charade, she came back to say that she knew for the first time since coming to Spain what it was to be as inconspicuous as she is in America.

5. What books do you recommend?

Well, of course, you have this book already. One wants Baedecker for facts and statistics; Washington Irving's "Tales of the Alhambra" for Granada; a brief history . . . such as "A Short History of Spain" by Henry Dwight Sedgwick, which gives much information concisely. And for your delight as you go, Borrow's "Bible in Spain," and the immortal Don Quixote.

We found a copy of Frances Minto Eliot's "Old Court Life in Spain" in a book shop in the Sierpes. It peopled the Alcazar and the old towns of Castile for us.

They have a saying in Spain, which is the land of proverbs, that "It is folly to speak Arabic in the house of the Moor." Perhaps, all these things you know already. I have only to add that other proverb which the Widow of José Fores, who keeps the inn at Benicarló quoted to us, who were strangers in her gate: "*Al*

buen varón, tierras agenas patria le son." To the stout heart, foreign lands are a fatherland.

THE END

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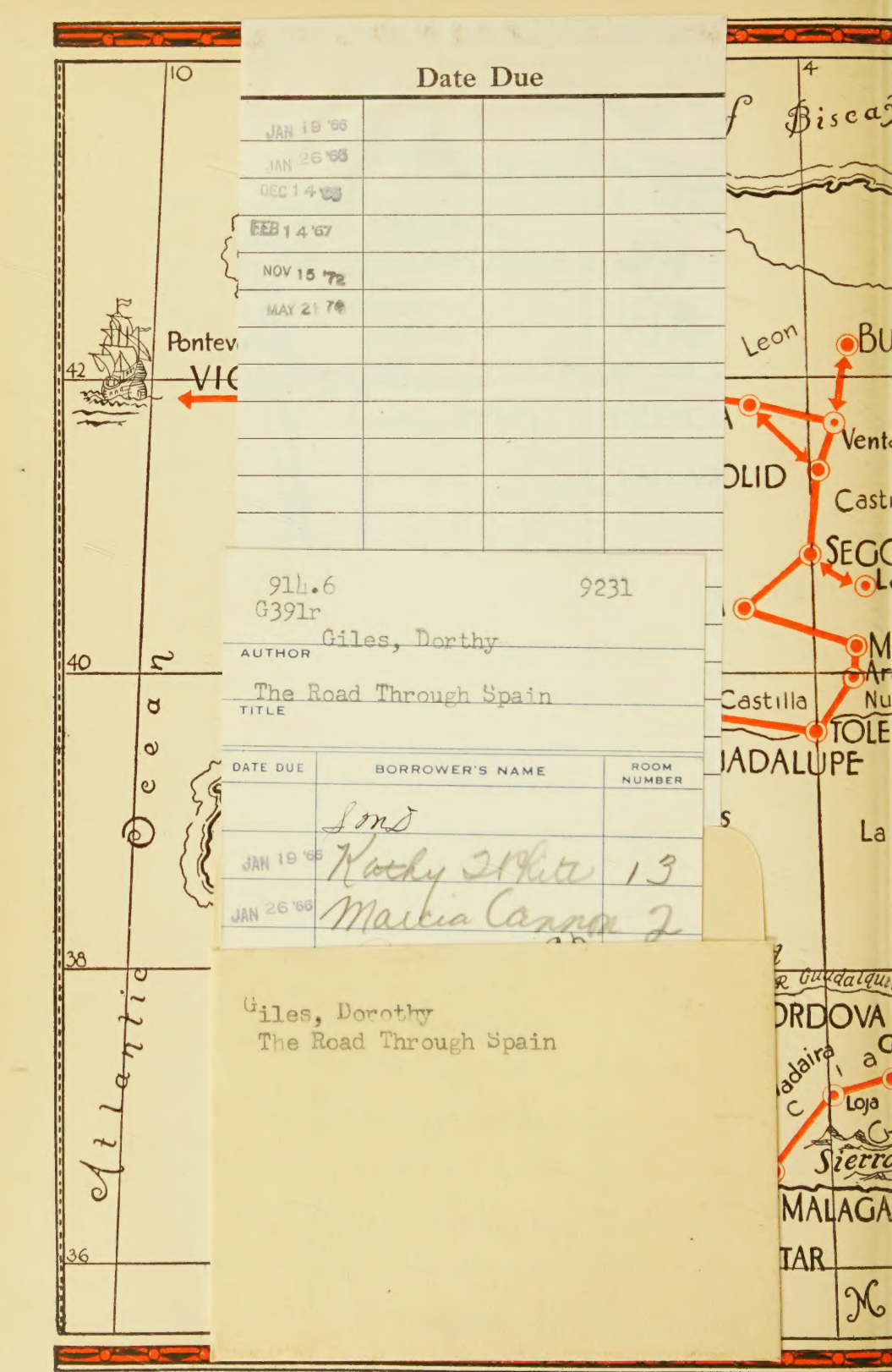
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38
36

FRANCE
The Roussillon
Pyrenees
PERPIGNAN
From Perpignan returned over the same route to Barcelona
Figueras
GERONA
San Feliu de Guixols
Tossa
Montserrat
Manresa
BARCELONA
POBLET
TARRAGONA
Port of Entry
Here began
"The Road through Spain"
Tortosa
Amposta
Benicarlo
Alcala de Chisvert
MINORCA
SOLLER
POLLENSA
MAJORCA
Valdemosa
PALMA
SAGUNTO
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